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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, June 29, 2004 ■ 28 pages | vol. IV | no. 202

Bishop slams 'wholesome' night with Pagcor women

By Armand N. Nocum and Blanche S. Rivera

GMA pushes tax on gross income

Scheme to raise ₱38B in gov't revenues

MEMORYTS while Pasig campaigned in Binondo, Manila, have their eyes on his presidential candidacy Fernando Poe Jr. under the Del Pan Bridge. They claim they were not paid to follow campaigner rallies.

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Doris C. Dumlao
Reporters

MIRED with a fresh rumpus and hooked by political allies who hold the majority of seats in Congress, President Macapagal-Arroyo is pushing for corporate tax reforms that will levy businesses based on their gross income, rather than net profit.

The proposed shift to a gross income tax system is expected to generate up to ₱38 billion in revenue for the cash-strapped government.

Mr Macapagal-Arroyo was one of her economic allies in a television interview aired late Sunday from door before her inaugural and a week after her proclamation as the winner of the hotly contested May 10 presidential election.

"The main problem in revenue generation is corruption. If we simplify the system, there will be fewer loopholes," Mr Macapagal said in the interview, stressing the tax system in Hongkong as a model.

Ultimately, I would like to change our tax system from net income to gross income because it's more simple," she added.

In another forum on Monday, Angelo Armand ng Philippine Government Relief Bureaucrats said the Macapagal must undertake crucial reforms to control the budget deficit and the debt burden while reforming the power and financial sectors during her term here.

Bureaucrats said drastic re-

FULL STORY ON A13

A CONVOY of armored personnel carriers from Turkey passes through Edsa on its way to Camp Aguinaldo to augment security for tomorrow's inaugural rites.

Poe to lead march today, says ally

By Pob Castroves, Lira B. Soberano and Philip C. Tubeza

SUPPORTERS opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. is set to "lead a march" today, the eve of President Macapagal-Arroyo's inauguration.

Heinrich Poe, elder and fellow movie actor Ruel Custro revealed this march to reporters amid rumblings circulated yesterday, saying the President's decision to run would be holding his own "pro-inauguration" in protest of the May 10 elections.

Custro revealed the "All Filipinos Leader Summit" organized by labor groups led by Bonifacio at the University of the Philippines Wilson Pentabros, Bonifacio pres-

dent, said the forum "welcomed" all forces "rejecting the legitimization" of Ms Macapagal's election victory.

According to Custro, the will join supporters assembled at the Balintawak Bonanza Chowboy of Quezon City and Mandaluyong at 2 p.m. He did not say where the march would proceed, although

FULL STORY ON A13

No immediate changes seen in GMA Cabinet

By John Lalosy-Javellana

AS MALACAÑANG yesterday finalized plans for "a very quiet" inauguration, President Macapagal-Arroyo hinted that she may drop some of her Cabinet secretaries.

She said not any one would come, who would go, and who would stay, but she indicated the changes might not come immediately.

Asked in an interview on ABC-CBN's "Sunday Up" program how many of her secretaries would be replaced or a reorganization, Ms Macapagal said: "I cannot say for sure. That is a continuing process."

She said she would have continuity in her Cabinet, even if it would be reorganized.

"I was the vice President and I was the President now, so we do not need a complete break. So there will still be continuity, even if we will add to—stopping over positions," she said.

Asked if the changes would come soon, she said: "Not immediately. There is no need because I am still in my same [position]."

She said that precisely before her each needed a new Cabinet

FULL STORY ON A13

Safety nets to cushion power rate hike

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., and Raoul W. Dumaya
Reporters

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will not lift a finger to stop National Power Corp. from increasing its rates by nearly double but she will make sure the poor and the industries will be spared the shocks of a sudden surge in their electricity bills.

"I am leaving Hapunot's rate hike to the ERC (Energy Regulatory Commission)," the President in a transcript of a television interview recorded by Malacañang.

"What is important is whatever

rate ERC approves, my Cabinet officials should start all efforts to minimize the impact on power of basic commodities and businesses."

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, a member of the Economic Monitoring Group (EMG), said the President had ordered Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. to come up with other ways to offset the blow of higher power rates.

Perez told reporters later that Malacañang had instructed energy officials to think of ways "to shield ordinary consumers" from higher power prices.

FULL STORY ON A13

Early handover ends US occupation of Iraq

BAGHDAD—The United States handed over sovereignty to an interim Iraqi government on Monday, formally ending a 14-month occupation days earlier than expected in a bid to forestall more guerrilla attacks.

The surprise ceremony that was finished before it was announced and before ordinary Iraqis were aware of it, legal documents banning any sovereignty were erased even by Iraq's outgoing US governor L. Paul Bremer in Chief Justice Midhat al-Mahmoud. The simple ceremony was attended by about a half dozen Iraqi and coalition officials in the heavily guarded Green Zone.

Within hours, Bremer left Iraq on a US Air Force C-130 military plane. His last statement to Iraq was spent in a meeting with a Zoo Rounds function, the top American commander in the country. An aide declined to say where Bremer was headed, saying only that "he was going home."

"This is a historic day, a happy day, a day that all Iraqis have been looking forward to," Iraqi President Ghazi Yawar said at the ceremony held at 10:26 a.m. (0626 GMT). "This is the time when we take the country back into the international community."

Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi said that he and other Iraqi officials "were capable of

IRAQI Prime Minister Iyad Allawi (center) walks on the US-led Coalition center in Iraq, Paul Bremer (right), shakes hands with the head of the Iraqi Chief Justice Midhat Mahmoud during the simple handover ceremony in Baghdad.

Gov't-MILF drive forces abductors to free engineers

By Charlie C. Salazar and Roberto D. Pascaquino
VOA Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—Kidnapped flood three victims of a giant robot commissioned from on Sunday following a joint operation launched by government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) forces in Lanao del Sur.

The victims were "in good health, but they have showed the strain that they underwent during the almost one month of captivity," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said.

Military reports identified them as engineers Annie C. Polintes of Iligan City, Jennifer C. Barrientos, of Dipolog City, and Bernadette T. Espinosa, of Davao City. They were handed by Ghadafi Commission to members of the military.

FULL STORY ON A13

A3
WEATHER FORECAST
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, JUNE 19, 2001
Second FRONTPAGE

Bombing mastermind nabbed

By Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER police Chief Insp. Roberto Camanista, the alleged mastermind behind the recent attempt to bomb several places in Metro Manila, has linked a major opposition figure to the plot.

Camanista, who surrendered today to the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP), submitted an extrajudicial confession to Ilo Deputy Minister of Justice and linked a woman opposition figure to the plan to allegedly overthrow the government, sources said.

The opposition figure was reportedly a standing member of Erap Muog's Consultative Assembly, sources.

Authorities tracked down Camanista in connection with the July 16 bombing of Malacañang, Batasan and Bantay Bata. When he was cornered, he surrendered to Armed Forces Inspector Ricardo Rimas who turned over the suspect to the National Bureau of Investigation.

Rimas also said Camanista admitted to masterminding the planning of explosions in different parts of the city.

Camanista was charged with rebellion yesterday at the DOJ. He waived his right for a preliminary investigation and the case might be resolved today, said Justice Undersecretary Manuel Mamaril.

Camanista, his helper Dante B. Fuentes, Antonio B. Hernandez, 40; Bobby L. Pilledo, 35; Benjamin Lim, a certain Lord, a certain Sajid, and Gar John Doe were charged last week at the DOJ with illegal possession of firearms and explosives and conspiracy to commit rebellion.

The charges against Hernandez and Pilledo would also be resolved today, Mamaril said.

"The charges against Camanista were changed after Benjamin Sitt, a 40-year old accountant and alleged financier of the plot, was arrested Friday by the Anti-Terrorism Task Force of Metro Emergency Center (EDC) head Chief Supt. Avelino Lumbao said they recovered a .38 caliber pistol from Sitt who was charged with rebellion at the DOJ on Saturday.

Silim said the DOJ was considering making the accused Fuentes, a government witness, after he cheated to withhold among what he knew about the plot on bomb different government installations in the capital and the plan to bring down the government.

They were allegedly with the group behind the bombs found in the Department of Interior and Local Government building in Quezon City, the Supreme Court in Padre Faura, the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) building in Ortigas Center, the Makati Stock Exchange building in Ayala Ave., the Makati Cinema Square, the Quezon City Hall, the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the Philippine Stock Exchange

US gives RP $4M more to fight terrorists

By Alcuin Papa

THE UNITED States has given the Philippines $4 million, or about P224 million, to enhance its military capability to fight homegrown and international terrorists.

The was announced by Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita after his meeting yesterday with admiral Thomas Fargo, commander-in-chief of the US Pacific Command (USPACOM), at Camp Aguinaldo.

"They made available some $4 million to enhance our intelligence operations," Ermita told reporters. He said it is be part of the Philippine Intelligence Modernization Program of the US Pacific Command.

The aid comes on top of the $113.46 million in security assistance pledged by Washington last year, including $50 million for the development of Mindanao where peace is enhanced.

US concerns

Fargo is in the Philippines as part of a Southeast Asian tour and to attend the inauguration of President Macapagal-Arroyo on Wednesday.

Aside on Sunday said the United States was concerned about the presence in the Philippines of the Jemaah Islamiyah terror group, seen by many security experts as the Southeast Asian wing of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network and network.

"In the fight against terrorism, you need good intelligence. The amount will go a long way to equipment, training and operational intelligence," Ermita said.

Defense Undersecretary for Military Operations Edgardo Batongay recalled the amount was given to the defense department after US Pacific Command Director for Intelligence Rear Admiral David Brewer visited Manila three months ago.

Details of the fund as well as the training of Filipino troops by American soldiers were threshed out in the talks between Ermita and Fargo yesterday.

Ermita stressed the US troops would not have a combat role in the war against local and international terrorists in the country.

"They (US troops) will not participate in any combat role. They will be restricted to battalion headquarters," Ermita said.

Like Balikatan

He said the training would be similar to the yearly Balikatan joint maneuvers held annually between US and RP troops.

Among the issues Ermita and Fargo discussed were the "successes" authorities had achieved in fighting terrorism, including the identification and arrest of the Surat Basmevi members of Al and al-Qaida.

"The good admiral informed us they were quite satisfied with what they heard and read so far as the efforts of the Philippine government against terrorism were concerned," Ermita said.

Gov't, MILF tie up

The US considers the Philippines a major non-NATO ally and President Macapagal-Arroyo one of its staunchest supporters in the US-led war against terror.

Ms Macapagal said in a statement yesterday Muslim organizations had joined government forces in tracking down terrorists.

"We are teaming up to send our terrorist cells, and we need to give the effort cohesion," she said.

With AP Reuters, AFP reports

From 'Tito Sen' to 'Tito Pen'

By Christine O. Avendaño

DON'T expect Sen. Vicente Sotto III to just fade away now that his term has ended and he prepares to go back to being a private citizen.

After running for seventh and winning in television shows and movies as part of a trio of comedians in the first shows and films going into politics where he was Quezon City vice mayor and then a senator for nine years, Sotto now day job-may be selling his newspapers.

Sotto, who was called "Tito Sen" by those close to him after he became a senator, said he was considering an offer to write a column for a broadsheet. He did not identify the newspaper that made the offer, however.

"I can do more damage outside of politics as a columnist," he said in an interview last Wednesday in Congress shortly before the proclamation of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Sen. Noli de Castro.

Sotto did not run in the Mike polls, preferring to help the pro-administration bid of opposition standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr. in the latter's personal campaign manager.

Sotto said he would write his own columns, noting that newspaper writing was nothing new to him.

He said his grandfather and namesake Vicente Sotto founded a newspaper in Cebu that was called "Ang Suga" or "The Light" in 1898.

He said he could be an effective columnist since he knows a lot about what is happening in the political arena.

Nararanasan mo ba ang mga ito:

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Ang madalas na pagkauhaw, pagkagutom, at madalas na pagihi ay maaaring palatandaan ng Diabetes, isang sakit na dama hanggang buhay.

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May abot-kayang gamot sa mamahaling sakit.

RiteMED

GMA pushes tax on gross income

From page A1

lucrative even necessary if the country was to see economic growth that was strong enough to make any headway in reducing poverty.

"We need to go with basic pain-or-shock..." Buensuceso told a gathering of the Foreign Correspondents' Association of the Philippines.

He explained that Ms Macapagal's new emphasis is "a window of opportunity" in dealing with key economic concerns.

"With a new mandate, most Filipinos people are hoping we can do a better," Buensuceso said, adding that if we respond not to short fiscal and foreign investors' "there is light at the end of the tunnel."

He said reducing the P200-billion annual budget deficit and increasing the power sector should top the agenda of the Macapagal administration.

The Manila-based Asian Development Bank says the ratio of the Philippines' gross national expenditure to gross domestic product of 14.4 percent last year, one of the lowest in Asia, would climb to 34.1 percent this year and to 2005 as the government needs to shore debt burden that gap.

In her TV interview, Ms Macapagal said additional revenue from a shift to gross income taxation should help the government improve the educational system as well as finance her other priority initiatives.

Based on government estimates, a rate of the gross income of corporations would boost the tax take anywhere between P1.6 billion and P14.7 billion.

A hit on the gross income of self-employed individuals or professionals, on the other hand, is expected to yield anywhere between P600 million and P5.2 billion in additional government revenue.

By taxing corporations and self-employed individuals based on their gross income, the bureau of internal revenue need not check the validity of their tax deductions and their net income declarations.

Any increase in the EIR has to undergo the all-congress of congressmen and professionals are tax-deductible. This rules out as to too much time and personnel on the part of the BIR, it also gives tax-wary businesspersons room to breathe.

The shift to gross taxation is expected to lighten the tax burden currently being shouldered by self-employed workers and lessen the tax avoidance.

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The shift to gross taxation is expected to lighten the tax burden currently being shouldered by self-employed workers and lessen the tax avoidance.

At present, self-employed individuals and corporations have more effective room to manipulate their earnings and cut their tax obligations.

Under a unified tax system, the government may push for a lower income tax for salaried workers by increasing tax deductions and allowing the nonpayment or exemption for withholding tax on bonuses.

Ms Macapagal said a shift to gross income taxation had been her campaign legislation in the previous Congress when she took office in 2001. Lawmakers, however, disagreed with her and the draft bill did not even pass the committee level in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

"It was spurned by lawmakers who pushed for other bills to replacement which I also appreciated," Ms Macapagal said. "But now, I would like to reinvent my wish to change the tax system to something similar to what they have in Hong Kong."

Foreign investments

With her political allies capturing the majority of seats in Congress and local government posts, Ms Macapagal is likewise expected to put more support in Congress in pushing for a change in the Constitution to help open the economy to foreign investment.

Ms Ailes and analysts agree that poor revenue collection, soaring debt, and a protectionist provisions in Constitution that keeps out foreign direct investment (FDI) in key sectors of the economy are the main constraints to reducing poverty.

Inflows of foreign direct investment dropped 57 percent from 2002's $1.61 million in 2003.

The Constitution currently bars majority foreign equity in strategic sectors such as mining, publishing and media and shipping, preventing the entry of foreign capital in areas where the economy has competitive advantage.

In the talk with foreign correspondents, Buensuceso also stressed that the peso would remain weak unless investors were convinced that the government was serious about reforming the economy and selling its budget gap.

"We have had to put a zero-tolerance press political posture," he said. "I think we are still paying for that because whatever we do, unless we can show that we're now on the path to economic reform, there will always be that question on the mind of investors. They want to see action."

"People will begin to judge us on the basis of deficits or deficit-ables that are used to address in the new or years," said Buensuceso, whose term ends in July 2006.

The peso hit a high of 53.31 per dollar on Friday, a day after Ms Macapagal's predecessor, Fidel Ramos, the local currency slipped back to 56.14 in the president's inauguration on June 30 and moved to 56.46 reached in March on pre-election jitters.

Unsustainable debt

He said the country's debt burden would not be sustainable without a deficit reduction program. The country's debt is now 77 percent of gross national income, giving it room to avoid cut, a way to reduce the deficit.

This is not at this stage where clearly we cannot veer away from a deficit reduction program," he said, adding that reducing the deficit was the first step toward attracting much-needed investment to stimulate economic activity.

He said the deficit reduction program was likely to be included in the priority reform measures that economic managers were discussing with candidates in Ms Macapagal's State of the Nation Address in late July.

Buensuceso also said an International Monetary Fund mission was in Manila because "they want to know what is the economic agenda for the next six years. What will be emphasized, what will be de-emphasized?"

The outstanding foreign debt of the Philippines, Asia's worst crisis sovereign debt issuer, stood at $60.7 billion at the end of March. The government's total debt is nearly $60 billion, nearly 80 percent of gross domestic product.

Buensuceso has said public sector foreign debt had an average maturity of 10 years, while private sector debt could mature in 10 years on average.

The government wants to limit its budget deficit to 4.2 percent of gross domestic product this year, or P197.2 billion, from 4.7 percent in 2003 and 5.2 percent in 2002, it wants a balanced budget by 2009.

The government has been struggling to sell off parts of National Power Corp., the country's largest power firm, to boost revenues and finalize the privatization.

The power firm expects to post a net loss of P15 billion this year, which would be equivalent to more than half of the power giant's fiscal deficit target. —With reports from AP and Reuters

Safety nets to cushion power rate hike

From page A1

Hispacor plan

Perez said the officials—including those of the Department of Energy, Napocor and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM)—were finalizing details of such measures that could be made:

- Increasing the power-generating capacity at which plants are operating;
- Installing a duty for power transmission and distribution utilities to minimize losses in the amount of electricity due to the existence of their wire systems and pilferage.
- Accelerating the process of selling Napocor plants to private companies.

● "We have been instructed to find means to cushion the impact of the rate hike. We will announce the particulars as soon as these are ready," Perez said.

He said: "The President has instructed us to come up with mitigating measures to ensure that low-income consumers would be shielded from the effects of a rate hike."

"In particular," he said, "[the President] wants to partly push the lifeline rate which provides significant discounts to non-peak-hour consumption."

Perez explained that, for example, in areas covered by Manila Electric Co., those using up less than 50 kWh a month enjoyed a 50 percent discount. Meralco also gives a 20-percent discount to those consuming from 51 kWh to 100 kWh and 70 kWh a month, and a 20-percent markdown for those using up between 71 kWh and 100 kWh per month.

"The lifeline rates are provided in the law and are, therefore, implemented by other distribution utilities the country," he said. "But no overbody knows of and understood what they are. The President wants this previous bills applied."

Perez added that Meralco is also recommended refund ways to subsidize lifeline rate could be "enhanced."

Inbofa said that among the measures being proposed were the enhancement of discounts granted by Meralco to poor households that use less than 100 kWh a month.

Staggered increases

The model immediately shield the poor from higher electricity bills while allowing the rest of the power costs on the middle- to top-per-class households, Inbofa said.

The government is also reviewing a proposal to adopt a staggered implementation of the rate increases—50 percent of the increase to be implemented immediately and the rest spread out over two years, especially for industries.

Inbofa said this would address concerns that a spike in power costs would make Philippine industries less competitive in the region.

He said the SEC was also reviewing proposals to offset the power rate increase with the anticipated boom of stock exchange companies. For example, the privatization of state-subsidiary tobacco industries pay higher taxes than non-tobacco assets to ease the pain on small Metro Manila households.

Inbofa said Napocor's new independent audit committee would conduct a cost management subsidies in the utility firm by P50 billion yearly, extra money it could use to finance other government projects.

While the plan of Napocor to increase its rates by an average of P1.85 per kWh or P4.71 nationwide would push up electricity bills in the near term, Mr Macapagal said this was by the first key step in making the Philippines' power costs the most competitive in the region.

"We have the means to do that," she said.

The President said a rate increase would make Napocor—which had been sold into a power generation firm and a transmission company—attractive to new investors that have the money to spend to build bigger and more efficient power plants.

Based on documents released by the Inquirer, Napocor has proposed to raise its generation rate in Luzon by P1.98 per kWh to P4.56, in the Visayas by P1.77 per kWh to P4.34, and in Mindanao by P1.55 per kWh to P3.13.

Napocor and PSALM filed a joint petition with the ERC to be allowed to increase its base rate in Luzon by P1.98 per kWh, in the Visayas by P1.77 per kWh and in Mindanao by P1.42 per kWh.

Napocor losses

PSALM is tasked with disposing off Napocor's assets and settling its debts, which have reached between $5 billion and $7 billion.

Officials base both figures considering that the petition aimed at enabling Napocor to achieve a return on rate base—a measure of profitability—of 4 percent. This is also the BOI-level at which Napocor is then guaranteed to be free against unsolicited competition.

The power firm's EGRB has dipped to negative 1.35 percent. It has suffered operating losses since the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998.

PSALM president Raphael Lotilla said the premium the rate increase would put Napocor's rates at competitive levels that would draw close to the true cost of electricity.

Lotilla declined to give figures when asked how much electricity rates currently cost Napocor. However, he insisted that these were comparable to those in Asia's other countries.

Perez, who is also PSALM chair, said the firm was considering to privatize those power plants that which investors were most interested.

Jo-An, Napocor has sold to local investors two small hydro power plants in Mindanao.

Ironically, Perez said one of the ways to make electricity more affordable to consumers was to bring up-date-to-my-rates.

The Daily Gospel

Tuesday, June 29, 2004
Sts. Peter & Paul, Apostles

1st Reading: Acts 12:1-11
2nd Reading: 2 Tim 4:6-8, 17-18
Gospel: Mt 16:13-19

Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They said, "For some of them are say John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "It is well for you, Simon Bar-jona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

And now I say to you: You are Peter (or Rock) and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the powers of death shall not overcome it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in heaven."

Commentary:

"For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets." In other words, the people are not thought the one of the past, in fact the think was on earth past, all they names they mentioned are the names of dead people. What's left unsaid: Jesus is not dead, yet, so what are they saying? Jesus is an unknown quantity and not an unknown now but an unknown still. I know a little more when I realized.

But he can mean more than many sense—the absolute—means made a fountain of life and said Peter was keen as "the rock on which he is a stone." He has one, also himself.

Could we say that there are two kinds of recognition. 1. when you think and don't actually think something is such or such or when thought it to be, and 2. when something confronts you or else gradually develop your mind to the point where you realize it is such or such. Peter's recognition situation. Before it "recognizes" knowing again. At the first case it is a typical of the one, it is a refusal of faith. In the second, it is the repeated self without losing being.

Now, how did your moment of peace to an hour as God? now, does it come than fact that in the community of the faithful is built.

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Supreme Court Doctrines

COMMERCIAL LAW (INCORPORATION OF FEE, LAW AND ACTIONS AND CONTRACTS)—After it received the bill of lading without any objection, consignee of the fertilizer corp. was prevented to have knowledge of its contents and to have assented to the terms and conditions set forth therein. The pre-assessment by the Bureau of Internal Revenue against Fertilizer Corp. in Court of Appeals (C.B. No. 69525, 30 August 1994, 305 SCRA 104) may be cited by analogy: "The holding in many jurisdictions has been that a shipper who receives certified bailing without objection after an opportunity to inspect it, and permits the carrier to act on it by proceeding with the shipment is presumed to have accepted it as correctly stating the contract and to have assented to its terms. In such a case, the acceptance of the bill without objection raises the presumption that all the terms therein were brought to the knowledge of the shipper and agreed to by him and, in the absence of fraud or mistake, he is estopped from thereafter denying that he assented to such terms." (Citations omitted.) Liberty Timber Enterprises, First Division, Fertilizer Insurance Corp. vs Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 118858, January 15, 2003)

RVS. B. Vitas

Early handover ends US occupation of Iraq

From page A1

controlling the security situation."

US officials hope that Iraqis will believe that they are now in control of their country and that will take the steam out of the insurgency.

Americans, as well as British, officials also say the handover is a key step on the path to democracy in Iraq. One of the government's first actions as a sovereign power is expected to be the imposition of emergency laws, including curfews, to crack down on rebellion.

A senior US administration official said in Istanbul, also of a Polish counterpart, that the handover would give Allawi more leverage and "strengthen his hand to deal with the factions inside his country."

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari said in Istanbul that the handover had been brought forward to try to thwart insurgents who might have been planning attacks to coincide with the ceremony that was originally scheduled for Wednesday.

"I believe that we will challenge these terrorists, criminals, Baathists and saboteurs more forcefully because we have the duty of the sovereign government," Zebari told reporters.

Guerrillas have recently mounted bloody attacks aimed at disrupting the handover, and several foreign hostages have also been captured over the past week. (*Additional story in The World, Page A16*)

Constraints on power

The interim government, whose task is to handle the day to day running of the country and work along with the US-led multinational force, is far from "full sovereignty," according to a UN Security Council resolution endorsing the move.

But there are important constraints on the powers of the interim government. Some of the major restrictions were imposed in the days before the handover. Many Iraqis feel it sought to limit the powers of an unelected administration.

The interim government, for instance, is banned from making long-term policy decisions and will not have control over 150,000 foreign troops who will remain in Iraq. The government has the right to ask them to leave, although it has made clear it has no intention of doing so.

After the handover ceremony, Allawi said that he was committed to holding elections next January as scheduled. Last week he announced he is asking the country might have the polls to be postponed until mid-February or March.

"The Iraqi government is determined to go ahead with elections on Jan. 31 of next year," Allawi told reporters.

All ministers in the new government were to be present in the morning and their ceremony reported later Monday, a senior coalition official said on condition of anonymity.

Asked why the new government decided to hold the transfer earlier, the official said Allawi had indicated his intention even 48 hours before.

"Allawi said we are ready to take this all over... It is part of our security strategy ... to have Iraqi officials be held accountable by Iraqis," the official said.

Formal room

The ceremony took place in a formal room with Louis XIV furniture. The office was inside the building that was formerly used by the Iraqi governing Council.

Allawi, who was seated in gilded chairs around a table, is the center of which was a bowl of flowers with a small Iraqi flag in it.

Just before the handover ceremony, everyone stood up, and documents were passed to the chief justice at 10:26 a.m. local time—4 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time—when Bremer signed, with black Magnum, the coalition's deputy's operations chief, was the only US military official present.

Bremer sat on the couch with President Ghazi al-Yawer.

Bremer left to express our thanks to the coalition," Allawi said. "There is no one to turn back now."

Bremer, wearing a dark suit and a blue tie with small white dots, read the transfer document, which was inside a blue folder. With a laugh, he referred to himself as the "ex-administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority."

Bremer stood on his right and Allawi on his left.

There was little initial public reaction to the near-secret handover ceremony, which was broadcast on Iraqi and Arabic satellite television stations. There was no celebration on the streets—traffic rumbled through Baghdad whenever Iraq's national soccer team defeats foreign clubs. —Reports from AP and Reuters

Corrections

A STORY on Page A7 in the June 26 issue said "Malaysia and Japan banged the prestigious Cannes Grand Prix Awards in the 'Fires and Emblems' and 'Cyber' categories, respectively." Roger Ile of DCB Philippines said the winner in the 2004 Cannes Grand Prix for Press is not Malaysia but the United Kingdom to be more precise. DDB London.

THE names of Leandro Bellen and Federico Macaranas, in the column paragraph of two photos accompanying the article "Death in Batasan" in the June 27 issue was published on Page C2 (Lifestyle) of yesterday's issue were inadvertently misspelled.

Our apologies for the errors.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors or arising to *Letter to the editor*, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, *Chino Roces Avenue*, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines, Tel. 897-4700-09, e-mail: *pdi@inq.philnet.gov.ph* and *dailyinq@inq.com.ph*

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor: Louie C. Camino

Maryo J: Focus on making films for world market

FULTIDE. Direc Reyes prepares Val Sotto for a scene in "Magkakaray."

By Pedro A. Tatad
Contributor

DIRECTOR Maryo J. de los Reyes thinks the Filipino film industry should focus on making films fit for the international market.

First, we should start calling what is currently Filipino, said De los Reyes, who directed "Magkakaray" and "Kalinlin," both in the ongoing Manila Film Festival.

"We should start looking for good scripts celebrating Filipino culture and I think the best source is Filipino literature," he said. "Whatever happened to those prize-winning scripts in the recent Palanca awards? They are a good source of materials.

"Nobody actually cares about these materials until they are discovered by a director who becomes so obsessed with them that he starts peddling the materials to interested producers. That's what I did to Magnifico. The story so fascinated me I didn't stop until I found the right producer."

Second, it's about time local film festivals start showcasing evil-intent films, he said.

"We have the talent you wanted to exhibit commercial films but why should they fight for slots in regular city cinemas for festivals? We have to show real art films in these festivals if we want to go international."

For the record, "Magnifico" was voted out of the Metro Manila Film Festival four years ago. It was chosen by 12 in a festival that limited its entries to six.

De los Reyes deplored the propensity of producers to recoup their investments but at the expense of quality. He said investments in films is limited for international release take time to recoup. "Magnifico took all it's year to get noticed internationally and now it is encouraging us producers," he pointed out.

"Magnifico" has won awards and invitations here and abroad and is booked to more international festivals until November. So far, it has won the grand jubilee from the international jury at the Berlin International Kinderfilmfest and to the Children's film festival in Rome. It has garnered a total of 46 Philippine and international awards.

De los Reyes made a surprisingly effective actor out of action star Robin Padilla in "Kalinlin," but the director was at the best in "Magkakaray," a moving love story lately told.

"I had I have just wanted to bloom," said De los Reyes, who long ago stood out among the crop of filmmakers with his earlier works like "High School Girls 56," "The Other Woman" and "Tagos ng Dugo," among others. "There were years of my learning period. They taught me how to handle different genres and so called formula films. I feel that I have matured a little bit and can use things in a better perspective.

"I guess this is what they call coming of age. Here I am in my fifties with more confidence and listen to members and others' ideas according to my own outlook."

He was judging in a scriptwriting contest when he stumbled upon the script of "Magnifico." Upon reading it, he said that whether the script won the contest or not, he would make a film out of it.

He shot "Magnifico" in 28 shooting days with a budget of a little more than P500,000. Film dealers in foreign film festivals were amazed that a Filipino can make an outstanding film for a little over half a million dollars and in 28 shooting days.

"I told them some Filipino filmmakers actually finish a film in seven shooting days, and they were aghast," he recalled. "I told give me $1 million and I will give you two or three more 'Magnifico.'"

Mobbed in Korea

When told that Filipinos don't always promote Philippine films that receive good notices abroad, he humbly said, "A prophet is never appreciated in his own country. And no film can withstand mentality 'You don't realize how good your countrymen is until he or she come home abroad.'"

When he brought "Magnifico" to the Pusan Film Festival in Korea, he says Filipinos there swung into film directors more than the local ones. "They have a vibrant film industry in Korea," he said. "They start lining up at the theaters at seven in the morning, and after the screening, they mob the film director. I never experienced being mobbed and asked to sign autographs until I went to Korea."

After watching so many films and engaging in dialogues with film directors and producers all over the world, he is convinced the only way the Filipino film industry can be saved is by hitting the international market. He cites the case of Korea, Thailand and Iran whose films are exhibited all over the world.

"They have no pretension. But the only way to hit the international market is by doing a celebrity movie or creating a romantic kid movie like Lolo and Jessa," he said. "I like this powerful love story between a Muslim and a Hindu, and without a single bullet. Dance in it. It was a very tender love story involving two married persons. It wasn't an amoral story. It was a good love story treated morally."

Sacrifices

And the filmmaker, "Magnifico" was created for its message. There is a certain mission there and I believe there was divine intervention. It talks about goodness, both, selfless love and dedication to humanity. It makes you believe man is basically good. The power of 'Magnifico' is that it is evidence to human unity."

After doing all the films he wants to do, De los Reyes, who has been in the business for 30 years, still probably relies in an ice him to dance to finish in Bohol, where artists in film, theater, dance and music can get together to exchange ideas.

His advice to young filmmakers: "Watch all kinds of films, from Jackie Chan to David Lean. Never stop learning and exploring. Encourage discussions with people who love films. Don't be in a hurry to make money. When you mature in your art and craft determining, you don't have to look for money. It will come to you. You can't be a good filmmaker overnight."

DE LOS REYES

The WORLD

CECILIA LAWRENCE B. GARCIA

Captured US Marine faces beheading

BAGHDAD—An Iraqi militant group issued footage on Sunday of a man it said was a captured US Marine and threatened to behead him, further heightening tension ahead of the June 30 formal handover of sovereignty.

Video shown on Qatar-based Arabic channel Al Jazeera showed a blindfolded man in a camouflage uniform, and an apparent Marine ID card identified him as Master Sgt. Al Marouni.

Jazeera said the group threatened to behead Marouni unless Iraqi prisoners are freed.

A US military spokesperson said a Marine by that name was missing from his unit but could not confirm he had been taken hostage. The spokesperson said the Marine, who was of Lebanese descent, belonged to the First Marine Expeditionary Force and had been missing since June 21.

Militants in Iraq have already seized three Turkish and a Bulgarian man over the past week in a new spate of kidnappings just days before the formal handover of sovereignty by occupying forces to an interim Iraqi government on June 30.

Fighters loyal to al-Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi said on Saturday they were holding the Turks and would behead them within 72 hours unless Turkey stopped working with US forces.

The threats have cast a shadow over US President George W. Bush's visit to Turkey for talks to commit on Monday and Tuesday.

In a separate video tape aired on Al Jazeera television on Sunday, masked third gunmen said they had seized a Pakistani hostage near Balad, north of Baghdad, and would kill him within three days unless Iraqi prisoners were released from jail.

This footage showed the man, who had no identity card given to construction working for US forces, urging Pakistan's president to close the country's embassy in Iraq.

Turkey and Pakistan are not part of the US-led coalition force in Iraq but many nations, as well as companies, workers, civilians and support staff for US troops.

Turkey refused to "bow to the kidnappers' demands, saying it has been "fighting terror—an activity that more than 20 years." Zarqawi's group beheaded a fourth Kuwaiti hostage last week after Kuwait refused to withdraw its troops from Iraq, and last month de-captured 12 others.

Zarqawi has also claimed responsibility for a series of bloody attacks, most recently a wave of suicide bombings and attacks across Iraq on Wednesday that killed more than 100 Iraqis and three US soldiers.

Washington has offered $10 million for Zarqawi's capture. —Reuters

THIS still image broadcast June 27 by Al Jazeera television shows a blindfolded US Marine kidnapped by an Islamic group that has threatened a beheading unless Iraqi prisoners are released. —AP

US: We don't hold Zarqawi

BAGHDAD—The US military denied reports on Monday that elite Mosab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian militant who Washington says is allied to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, had been captured in Iraq.

"It's not true, the reports are not true," Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, deputy director of operations for the US military in Iraq, told Reuters. "We've heard the reports about it, but they are not true."

Earlier, reports on a US-funded Iraqi radio station had suggested Zarqawi had been captured near the town of Mihi, 100 km south of Baghdad, in the Shiite area of responsibility. A correspondent for the Arabic television station Al Arabiya reported that Kimmitt had confirmed the capture.

Zarqawi is accused of organizing or carrying out dozens of deadly attacks in Iraq over the past seven months, including a series of blasts and shootings last week that killed more than 100 Iraqis and four US soldiers.

A group allied to him has also claimed responsibility for the beheading of several hostages, including three Turks who have been threatened with beheading unless Ankara recalls all Turkish nationals from Iraq. —Reuters

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ILOILO CITY
Casino Cuenca Hotel
Board Room 3rd Level
cor. Ruamoeng & Rizal
Sts. La Paz, Iloilo City
(2-5 p.m.)

Nato offers to train Iraqi forces

ISTANBUL—Nato leaders on Monday pushed ahead thorny moves over long-range transfers to help Iraq with military training, and vowed to fight talks on reshaping their alliance for new security threats.

"A period of distrust between China, Islamabad, Rome and Berlin is over and a new period of collaboration has begun," declared Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi after a summit in Istanbul on Sunday for the leaders of Nato's 26 nations.

Nato Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer cited the alliance's plans to undertake joint missions in Afghanistan in proof that it can project stability far from national borders.

The leaders will also agree to train the interim Iraqi forces, which formally took over power from the US-led occupying authority on Monday, two days ahead of schedule.

"We need training and sometimes equipment," Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari told reporters after meeting British Prime Minister Tony Blair on the sidelines of the summit.

"We need to build our capabilities to cope in the challenges and we have asked Nato to train Iraq seriously."

But the deal on helping Iraq falls far short of the hopes on the ground role Washington had sought for the alliance, which was scorched by French and German resistance.

And it only came after wrangling that echoed last year's pre-war row over boosting Iraq neighbor Turkey's defenses.

Indeed, while US officials hosted exposures in glowing terms about the training agreement, Paris was distinctly cool.

French officials said it would be a job for allies not the alliance as a whole, and there would be "no force flag" in Iraq. —Reuters

A TURKISH security officer at the Habur customs station flies the new red across the Bosphorus River in Istanbul June 27. —AFP

HK's richest woman won't get hubby's estate

HONG KONG—Hong Kong's wealthiest woman Rosanna Yeo has long been using legal battles for control of her late husband's estate, valued at more than $1 billion.

The 64-year-old former Miss Hong Kong aims to funnel her late husband's money, formerly spread out and her worth in public, was previously ruled to have forged the will of her husband, Teddy Wong.

The Court of Appeal judges ruled 2-1 Monday in upholding the court's original decision and giving the estate to her father-in-law.

At stake is the Chinachem property group, of which Wong invested control before her husband was declared dead. She has since kept it up to HK$27 billion ($3.4 billion) property empire.

The legal dispute has raged through Wong Kong's courts for the best part of a decade since the disappearance of Teddy Wong in 1993 after a reported kidney attempt.

His body is believed to have been dumped in the South China Sea by gangsters. He was declared dead in 1997.

Two years ago, Hong Kong's Court of First Instance ruled that a will purportedly written by her late husband in 1990 was either.

A trial judges ruled at the end of the 175-day trial, the longest ever civil case in Hong Kong, that the document, supposedly drawn up by the wealthy industrialist just before his disappearance, was "probably more-or-less definitely forged."

The false document named Miss Wong as the sole executor and heir to story of her husband's large estate.

But the court ruled that Wong Dixdale should be the sole executor and beneficiary of his son's fortune.

In the trial, experts in handwriting and ink-dating, chemists and armed-experts were asked to verify the authenticity of the 1990 document and the signatures on it.

The court heard that Teddy Wong had asked his father to employ a private detective to spy on his wife in 1988, and discovered that she was having an affair.

A few months later Wong made a second will naming his father as sole beneficiary of his estate, revoking to realize testament giving his wife and his father a half-share each.

In February, Forbes magazine estimated Wong's personal worth at $2.3 billion.

However, it is unclear if the court's ruling will affect her private fortune and she is embroiled in further legal wrangles over her role in Chinachem. AFP

South Asia talks on Kashmir end on positive note

NEW DELHI—India and Pakistan pledged on Monday to hold a summit and serious discussions for a final settlement of their dispute over Kashmir after the nuclear-armed neighbors held their first formal talks in three years.

The two sides said they had made progress since a tentative peace process began last year, but as expected, no major breakthrough was announced on the explosive Kashmir row which has bedevilled ties for half a century and sparked two wars.

"They held detailed exchange of views on Jammu & Kashmir and agreed to continue the sustained and serious dialogue to find a peaceful negotiated final settlement," a joint statement said after the talks between the two countries' top foreign ministry officials.

The neighbors who were on the brink of war in 2002 said they would remove full staffing at their respective embassies, reopen consulates in Bombay and Karachi, release fishermen held in prisons and finalize a pact to notify the other side of missile tests.

The two-day talks in New Delhi between Indian Foreign Secretary Shashank, who uses only one name, and his Pakistani counterpart, Riaz Khokhar were the first on Kashmir since a failed 2001 summit between leaders of the two countries.

"The talks have begun positively, it's a good beginning ... we have to move forward and we will go forward," Indian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Navtej Sarna told a news conference.

The two sides would hold talks on a range of other issues that plague bilateral ties including a military standoff on the Siachen Glacier, the world's highest battleground, between the third week of July and first half of August, he said.

The foreign ministers of the two countries also expected to meet later in August to review progress on a peace process that is seen as the gathering momentum.

The New Delhi meeting ended early to allow Pakistan's Khokhar to return home a day early. Indian media said this was due to domestic developments arising out of Saturday's resignation of Pakistan Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali.

Jamali's resignation was not expected to have any impact on the peace process as Pakistan's military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, is seen to be in direct control of foreign policy.

The talks between Shashank and Khokhar were part of a renewed bid for peace launched by the two countries after they came close to a third war over the scenic but troubled Himalayan region of Kashmir in 2002.

Analysts had not expected the two-day talks to produce a quick fix to the dispute but earlier in New Delhi and Islamabad an opportunity is understood each other's stance and move forward. Reuters

WORLD BRIEFS

Saddam in dock soon

BAGHDAD — Saddam Hussein will be hauled in chains before an Iraqi judge within days to hear his arrest warrant and the ousted president will be questioned by Iraqi officials assisted from the US military, top Iraqi officials said Sunday.

SADDAM

"We're going to have control of Saddam (Hussein)," Iraq's national security adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie told the US television network CBS. "We're going to have two American advisers only sitting (with) us hand him over to four Iraqi policemen. They will put a chain (on him) and take him to the waiting room," Rubaie said. "The judge will call his name. Saddam Hussein Majid. And they will bring him in ... open his chain, handcuff and take him to the judge and the judge is going to give him his rights and his sentence and he's going to issue an arrest warrant against (Saddam)," he said. Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi meanwhile said Saddam "will be tried by Iraqis ... We may ask a multinational force to be involved in the protection of the outside, of the outskirts of the prisons, but definitely he will be under the jurisdiction of Iraq," he said. AFP

6 dead in Mideast violence

GAZA/C Israel — Two people, including a 3-year-old child, were killed Monday when rockets fired by the Palestinian militant group Hamas hit a kindergarten in southern Israel, hours after a deadly attack on an army post in southern Gaza. The deaths brought the toll from a flare-up in bloodshed to six in less than 12 hours from four separate incidents, including an explosion underneath an army observation post in southern Gaza. It also served to underline optimism among Israeli political leaders that they had managed to bring Palestinian militant groups to heel after one of the longest periods of relative calm in the region since the September 2000 start of the Palestinian intifada, or uprising. AFP

Serbia's new president

BELGRADE — Pro-West reformer Boris Tadic declared his nationalist rival in a crucial presidential run-off election in Serbia, unofficial results showed Sunday, confirming the Balkan republic's orientation toward Europe. Speaking after his apparent election as the first post-communist president of Serbia since World War II, Tadic pledged to seek greater integration with Europe. "Serbia's path to Europe has no alternative," the 46-year-old said. According to unofficial results given by the republic's electoral commission and confirmed by independent monitors, Tadic won around 53 percent of Saturday's vote compared to nationalist Tomislav Nikolic's 45 percent. Nikolic conceded defeat after monitors from the Center for Free and Fair Elections declared themselves content that Tadic, leader of the Democratic party (DS) of slain Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, had won a five-year term. AFP

Taliban militants kill 16

KABUL — Suspected Taliban militants have executed and killed 16 Europeans had registered to vote in Afghanistan's upcoming elections, which the ousted militia has vowed to disrupt, officials said Sunday. The group was pulled from their vehicle in south-central Uruzgan province and shot dead, apparently for carrying voter registration cards, Khas Uruzgan district chief Haji Obaidullah told AFP. "On Friday 17 people were on their way from Qalaigaun capital Tarin Kowt to Khas Uruzgan, almost 30 kilometers from Khas Uruzgan. Each vehicle was stopped by armed men," he said. AFP

REAL ESTATE

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Lito Cesar D. Mangawang

MASTER Fernando Sena, president of the Art Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc., and Jimmy Navarro, president of the Eastwood City Art Club, with their artistic interpretation of the five endangered marine animals

GO out and walk your pets at Eastwood. This mall has openly declared itself as "pet friendly."

Satellite city's IT image finds soul in arts, environment-friendly policies

By Tessa R. Salazar

EASTWOOD City, the IT and lifestyle hub in Libis, Quezon City, is learning how to "chill out" in its own unique way.

This IT hub, where half of Bistro Blanko's call centers are "birds and insects," is metamorphosing from its cyber image into being one, adding a soul and a more human face to its commercial developments.

For the past four months, it has been incubating aspiring visual artists, and four become a boon host for indoor conservation efforts.

The 35-hectare satellite city that features bars, movie theaters, and various other "wedding hubs" in Libis, will house 19 residential towers, which would eventually be home to 5,000 families. Six of the towers have already been sold out and are now operational.

Pet friendly

Eastwood has made history as the first satellite city in Albayzeta to enact its commercial establishments. This hub has openly declared itself as "pet friendly." Almost 80 percent of commercial establishments in Eastwood are open to pets, except in cinema, cybermall and some fine dining restaurants.

"You see [pets] walking with their masters in the covered walks. We have encouraged people to really go out and walk their pets. But we also advise them to take their pets home by 6 p.m. because humans normally invade the entertainment parts [by then] and pets would be stressed out," says Enrique M. Soriano III, Eastwood's Realty Associates president and CEO.

ERA is engaged by Eastwood to manage and market Eastwood City and its other commercial developments.

Art support

Soriano stresses that the owners also have the responsibility to clean the litter, and serve their pets while using the enclosures.

Eastwood has also openly supported the arts—indigenous and otherwise.

For instance, it has sponsored the "Pandayan" or the Cesar Saul Miguel Foundation Biennale of Cebu Boljoons.

Cebu Boljoon is known for creating "balls from the prestigious Jollibee music school to small rural folk, particularly Zambales pranksters, keen to play classical instruments."

Cebu's grandfather was the first violinist in the Philippines.

One of Eastwood's big footnotes must to Cafe Adriatico is donated to the group as a symbolic support. All coins from the fountain will be donated to the children enrolled in the school in Zambales. Paper bills being tossed over to the Eastwood management for the Zambales children are also being turned over to them.

Other advocacies

One advocacy supported by Eastwood is Fernando Sena's art club, which meets in the Home Center of the Eastwood every Tuesday. Eastwood decided to invite aspiring artists with the hope that they would promote and exhibit their works in Eastwood for free.

Another advocacy is the support for the Kalinga Kalikasan Pilipinas, more popularly known as the World Wildlife Fund Philippines. WWF-Philippines partnered with Eastwood City on June 6 and drew over 75 painters for a painting festival targeting to canvas five endangered marine animals—the dugong, dolphin, hawksbill whale, the whale shark and the marine turtle.

It coincided World Earth Day with "ARTventurous: A Date to Art and Nature," an on-the-spot painting activity at the Eastwood City Walk II.

Soriano says the paintings are now under its cinema level. Supporters of the conservation efforts of the WWF-Philippines are welcome to view its paintings and buy them.

Another fountain will be dedicated for the conservation advocacy of BWE.

The social advocacies of Eastwood have also created the Eastwood tourism and cultural corridors.

"We felt that, because of the stress and the frenetic pace of IT and the call centers, we realize that people also need to refresh their minds via these advocacies, and we need to [put] some soul in what they do," says Soriano.

Eastwood has also supported a group advocating organic products. At the Home Center are an assortment of organic products, which are sold at the Eastwood during weekends. On weekdays the products are distributed to other ERA developments in the Makati area.

On equal footing

Eastwood takes its pets seriously, and considers pets on almost equal footing with its owners. "Pet ownership has taken four forms. With the initiative of PAWS Philippines Animal Welfare Society), we realize the need to institutionalize this.

"We want pet owners to come not just as

EASTWOOD'S fountains are symbolic supports for arts and conservation efforts.

THE SERENDRA unit is a perfect blend of Asian cultures and modern design, aptly called "Asian Modern."

THE MASTER'S bedroom at this new development opens up to provide expanse of lush greeneries and breathtaking view.

Serendra: A fusion of Asian cultures and world-class design

HELITRAL and natural colors were utilized in Serendra to bring in the warmth and coziness into the clean shell.

FOCUSING on one region rather than a country in terms of interior design and style proves to be more attractive and cheerful.

This is the main pursuit of Budi Lenny + Bond Branch Designs, the firm tasked by real estate locale Land Inc. to design the two-bed, two-bath unit of its latest residential project, Serendra.

"Going each neighboring country's route in terms of its culture, arts, cuisine and industrial sup-routes is monotonous and very often stereotypical. We chose to combine all three elements in a challenge," says Budi Lenny, one of the top honchos of the firm.

The firm believes that architecture, planning and interior design should complement each other, according to Lenny. Projects that the firm has finished include private residences, which are actually expressions of the clients' lifestyles and personalities.

"We try to create textures based on our client's needs and requirements. We try to innovate or introduce new approaches to avoid being stagnant and mundane," says Lenny.

The firm tries to introduce new approaches to avoid being stagnant and mundane," says Lenny.

THE LIVING room is a perfect place to enjoy bonding moments with the family.

The firm tries to introduce new approaches to avoid being stagnant

Asian modern design

The firm interpreted nature in a modern design scheme, which Lenny aptly calls "Asian modern," a design that highlights the region's characteristic qualities in a modern and innovative approach. "We designed and furnished the interior architecture of Serendra's two-bedroom unit with a light natural, monochromatic, homogenous feeling vibe," Lenny explains. "We only used wood as accents and complemented it into carpets in the bedrooms for a feeling of warmth and intimacy," the interior designer recounts.

With a total area of 138 square meters, the unit appears more spacious because the interior doors were made into framed translucent panels and the lavatory were brought to maximum. "The partitions were made translucent and translucent to light having to the natural light from the balconies to the inner part of the unit like the powder room and toilet and bath."

"The manufacturers as well as craftsmanship of the glass panels contributed more to the unit's spaciousness," notes Lenny, and adds that, "It's like there's space beyond space." It can create an illusion of vastness. Lenny says interiors were developed in the units.

He also explains that "up lighting" was more of the firm's priority in giving the bedroom unit the desired height. "We worked up the ceilings, which actually made the rooms appear higher," he notes.

For decoration and furnishings, Lenny cites the Serendra unit creates neutral and natural colors and makes it "to bring in the warmth and coziness into the clean shell." Low and light wood and silhouettes of furniture were used to have an unobstructed visual sweep of the rooms.

To finish the look of the Serendra unit, accent colors are present in the artworks designed by Filipino artisans using modern styles and proportions, and accessories sourced locally and around Asia. These Asian elements, according to Lenny, are set against the clean, modern canvases, which gave more emphasis on the pieces of furniture.

Breezy and flexible

Lenny explains that this particular Serendra unit would appeal to several markets.

"The two-bedroom unit is actually flexible because it fits both the young and the old in terms of size and design," he says. "Young couples can entertain their friends in the unit, or grandparents can actually host lively parties for their regs age grandchildren. They can simply enjoy spending time with their loved ones," he adds.

Aside from being modern, Lenny says the unit is homey and breezy, which is what Serendra is all about. "It's not exactly home because one can only depict a gathered neighborhood and still have the convenience of being near the facilities and establishments of the city."

Lenny is an international designer of furniture and interiors. His designs, inspired by Filipino craftsmanship and local natural materials, have graced some of the world's finest hotels, offices and residences. He studied at the New York School of Interior Design, and later took up architecture at University of Santo Tomas. He spent several years traveling the world, expanding his understanding of foreign cultures, art and design.

The condo investment game according to Lance Gokongwei

HOLDING for a second call in the country these days has never been more tempting. With all the great options being developed, selecting the best condo to fit your needs and your budget may seem like a daunting task. You could easily get lost in the hype and the labyrinth of details. So, here are our pointers with you, from to the condo investment game.

Robinsons Land Corp. president Lance Y. Gokongwei offers five solid pointers as embodied in the RLC's latest enterprise, the Fifth Avenue Place, inside Fort Bonifacio Global City.

Buying ahead

A prime consideration is timing. In making any business decision, timing your investment to the economic upswing is best all the millionaires. Lance believes that Philippine economy is on the threshold. "Last year, the country's gross domestic product and gross national product reached its highest level since 1997," he says. Betting on this bullish outlook on the economy, Lance notes that part of making it big is the condo investment game is buying ahead of this event, when will only cost in as soon as favorable economic conditions jumpstart the asking price.

The second most important thing to consider is the reputation of the developer. Lance warns that investing in a condo is no different from buying any major consumer item like a computer or a car. It is enticing to buy on the basis of a marketing promise but it would save you a lot of trouble if you check out the developer's track record. As Lance proudly puts it, "RLC is backed by the strength of the JG Summit Group and has a solid reputation for completing projects on time and on specifications, meeting all estate standards of buyers." With this reputation, RLC has become one of the largest mall and condo developers in the country today.

Location

Third on the list of condominium investment considerations is location. A reputable developer ensures full assurance of the location of his project, as an individual investment. Investors you have to be certain the property you want to buy offers a real hedge against uncontrollable factors like inflation. A great location, such as in the premium portion of fort Bonifacio, offers the kind of hedge, taking note that the long-term value of land in the area is expected to rise as its development continues.

"Previous investors were clamoring for RLC to come up with a condo development in the Makati-Fort Bonifacio area," notes Lance. "Future tenants will find the location so close to Fifth Avenue Place highly desirable, not only is just within walking distance from the business establishments in town, but also highly accessible from major areas of the metropolis through Fort Bonifacio's strategic point of entry," he adds.

LANCE GOKONGWEI gives his solid reasons to consider when investing in a new condo. RLC's latest enterprise, the Fifth Avenue Place inside Fort Bonifacio Global City lies all the elements to be the buyer's needs and must in the market. Turns left is chief architect of the Fifth Avenue Place, William Cruzabierta, and Frederick Go, RLC executive vice president.

Architect

Lance also believes that the architect behind the project is just as important as the location. "RLC has assisted its collaborators with architects William V. Cruzabierta for the development of Fifth Avenue Place," he says. Architect Cruzabierta is also behind other RLC landmarks such as the Robinsons Galleria Complex in Ortigas, the Robinsons Place in Ermita, Manila and the Robinsons Summit Center in Makati. Instead of building the two towers, architect Cruzabierta decided to endure only one detail of the city's 4,200 square-meter lot to build the 23-story Fifth Avenue Place, thus allotting more than 35 square meters for lot for amenities like jogging path, gardens, bathroom rooms, swimming pools and a playground.

The 18th and ultimately the most definitive consideration, is value. With RLC's stipulation in terms of its property, the owners of Fifth Avenue Place could easily secure a unit for as low as P60,000 per sq.m., which is lower than the prevailing score in the Makati-Fort Bonifacio area. "RLC is attuned to the needs of its buyers," he explains, "we made it a point not only to satisfy them needs but exceed them."

Satellite city's IT image finds soul in arts, environment-friendly policies

From page A8

families but to consolidate their jobs here, only because that is a sprawling 13-hectare development in keeping in the owners on responsible, they could easily locate the resorts," says Ronda Tan, Filo's director for commercial operations, commercial services group.

Tan also reveals plans for a daycare center for pets, and an animal house and store that sell pet accessories and clothing.

At this point Filo's Ding celebration, Eastwood held an event dubbed "Running Cats and Dogs," a pet and owner parade. Activities and seminars such as pet grooming and basic training on pets were held around various Eastwood establishments. Other events included a Halloween contest.

PAWS, the nonprofit watchdog against animal cruelty, awarded Eastwood recently for being the first privately satellite city in the country.

One step further

Soon after welcoming its pets, Eastwood will step up one step further.

"At some point, we were discussing the possibility of having a pet restaurant. If you walk into several restaurants and cafes, you could find yourself and have something for your pet too," remarks Gonzales.

Specific products will be attached to some of these restaurants. Should there be a restaurant with a pet coming in, there would be somethings for the owner.

Of course, vegetarian restaurants (for humans) wouldn't be too far-fetched. As early as March, the management has been negotiating for what Gonzales called "really good veggie restaurants."

Expansion

Eastwood still has three hectares open to its underwriters, which is being considered for new urban residential and office development. This time, however, it would have a park, a lagoon and open spaces.

Eastwood is also negotiating with owners of adjacent properties for the possibility of expanding the satellite city.

All these developments, however, would support Eastwood's IT locators, which is still considered its "raison business." Eastwood officials, as they foresee growth in economic center even up to 2008.

Eastwood is also bent on tapping the upper-middle market for its residential sector. The growth of the commercial services sector has also been steadily growing for the past few years.

Soriano insists that Eastwood's three key success areas are still on the growth mode. Indeed, in the development group is handled by a different business unit. IDA, for instance, is focused on making sure that commercial developments are up to speed.

INQUIRER

OPINION

Austerity

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered "simple and frugal" inaugural rites to be held in Manila and Cebu. But if the really wanted to save money, the inauguration should be held in only one city. She also said that the hallmark of her administration would be "a simple lifestyle and a simple way of government." We believe she has no choice: the government coffers are nearly empty (last month the budget deficit was P12.6 billion), and to a lot of savings and scrimping has to be done.

EDITORIALS

Where to start? A program of austerity will have to start with the elimination or reduction of non-essential expenditures. This abroad will have to be limited to those that are absolutely essential to maintain diplomatic relations or fulfill international obligations. Non-productive casual and temporary employees will have to be laid off. Government has to be turned into a lean, productive working machine.

The purchase of luxurious vehicles for government officials will have to stop. Officials will have to make do with the government's fleet of cars and will have to have old cars reconditioned. Mercedeses, Fagottinoses and BMWs are not absolutely necessary for the smooth functioning of the bureaucracy.

Even clothes will have to be simple—no Armanis or Zegnas for the men, no Pradas or DKNY for the women. Simple barong Filipino or locally tailored suits will have to do for the men and inexpensive office dresses for the women. We remember that President Diosdado Macapagal, the father of President Macapagal-Arroyo, decreed that government officials and employees should wear inexpensive clothes, in line with his policy of "simple living." We believe something similar should be done today, if only to impress upon government officials and employees that they have to live simple, frugal lives.

The source of government funds and resources has to be reduced, if not entirely eliminated. One wasteful practice that has to stop, or at least drastically curtailed, is the pork barrel. Every year, billions in pork barrel are spent on projects that have low economic and social impact such as community basketball courts and waiting sheds. The project sponsors even have the temerity to place on these projects signs like "This is a project of Rep. So and So," as if they, and not the people, owned the funds that were used to build these things. If the billions spent on basketball courts and waiting sheds were instead spent on schoolhouses, hospitals and health centers, they would benefit more people and meet their most urgent needs.

In 1981 Duane Elgin, in his book "Voluntary Simplicity," said that while a person may have the means to live an expensive and perhaps luxurious life, he or she can voluntarily choose to live, instead, a life of voluntary frugality. Today, most Filipinos will have to live lives of involuntary simplicity. They have no choice because times are hard, the prices of goods and services are rising while their incomes remain stagnant. They will have to scrimp and save and make the best use of every peso.

After a very costly electoral campaign where the administration tapped every fund, every budgetary allocation that could be tapped, the government is practically broke and will have to live within its means. The example in simple living will have to come from the top. We are glad that the President has made a good start in ordering "simple and frugal" inaugural rites. This should set the right tone for her six-year term. Now, let's tighten our belts and prepare for six years of involuntary simplicity and enforced frugality.

Simplicity

IF THE PRESIDENT is really serious about her call for simple and frugal living, she should study "Voluntary Simplicity" required reading for all government officials and bureaucrats. The idea of this revolutionary book can be summed up in three phrases: frugal consumption, ecological awareness and personal growth. Elgin believes that one can live a life that is outwardly simple and yet inwardly rich.

In his book, Elgin quoted Richard Gregg, who was a student of Gandhi's teachings: "Voluntary simplicity involves both [the] inner and outer condition. It means singleness of purpose, sincerity and honesty within, as well as avoidance of exterior clutter."

In this increasingly materialistic world, there is a need to return to a life of simplicity and frugality. The thought that more than a billion people in the world live in absolute poverty while another billion live in excess should make us pause and reexamine our lives, and particularly our patterns of spending.

Rare consensus

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

TODAY'S political scenario and issues bother very few citizens everything, except this. We can't afford to indulge, just again, the passion of politicians versus economy and monetary reflex. Candidates to poll watchers and ordinary voters, from Aparri to Jolo, Metro agree.

The majority seek election reforms now, adding votes manually sets a method free from fraud in the 11th national elections. Enterplaying to the 2004 national elections, in this "Cyberspace Age," was grotesque.

Say results of voting days ago Antipolo," the newspapers voodoo around the county time says, "Bobo Sipag is half down."

A review of the country would be a useful first step. It will show, however, that a poll modernization law is already in the books. But Republic Act 8436 gathered dust there, as the controversial May 10 elections showed.

"It did not do to crush a few dents now and then," the dusty lawyers never answer. Alan Time once joked, "just as long as you don't break me."

Instead of implementing the law, Commissioners Luzviminda Tancangco, Rufino Javier, Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadain—were dubbed in the "Gang of Four"—handed a P600-million pen-and-computing project. It dropped. Hundreds of furious voters found on May 10 that their names had disappeared from Board lists.

The Supreme Court struck down a P6.38-billion contract on May Tancangco, Sadain and on a Comelec budget of P11.2 billion. Those were for supposedly simpler good registration cards from PhoenIXet. Many who queued up to have their photos taken still have not received the cards. Those who have must laminate them or their vote expires.

Tancangco is "biased with election registration and the voters' list—as if election-related those," former Rep. Ding Teopaisos, chair of the House committee on electoral reforms, complained. The modernization is now abandoned by law (RA 8436). But provision is in open defiance of law."

Tancangco's chief mistake seen as commission with the impeachment case lodged in 2002 by the National Movement for Free Elections against the lady.

Modernization floundered because many have to rules are devalued into many suggestions, by officials who are supposed to implement them, said by those who wrote them. "If a government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for the law," US Supreme Court Associate Louis Brandeis once reminded. "It invites every man to become a law unto himself."

It's 30 to 35 votes, plus three abstentions, the House committee on justice refused to even examine the impeachment documents against Tancangco. Not did they bother to explain their votes, although Lakas rules require those who vote nay to do so.

Who learned from abuse? Tancangco abstained herself from 42 percent of Comelec sessions to endure or refer the charges on by Chair Alfredo Benipayo. House members noted "the influence by absence" to dodge a vote if impeachment documents were sufficient. "It fail to make amendment as the House of Commons compulsory law must passed by a vote of three to two," Bibi's friend Feisal says joked.

Congressmen like Rodolfo Fontanos of San Juan, disappointed from the senate floor when the impeachment came up for a final decision. Impasse? This is a country where, our critics say, the Ten Commandments have been watered down into Ten Suggestions.

Not all the wrongdoing is in current government. Some Comelec officials swept under the carpet of Supa Lupo and Hontanosas," the late historian Horacio de la Costa, S.J., noted in his paper. Norms and Development in the Philippines." Dinky's suppression, who serves as chair of the Bishop's Committee on Public Affairs, must not be done unchecked by the senators."

Failure to closed with warnings compromised the convoluted process, said Mayo Pardo. scores over dubious computers cobbled on, until the Supreme Court struck that one down also.

Failure to learn from failure to computerize many Filipinos re-election fund counter," the Cebu Daily News found in in May 15 and Oct. 31, 2002 editorials. "We'll go into the 2004 election with the old manual counts...where is other's mouth before Thumbprint find our votes were denied."

Overhanging a "decades" of depressed credibility" commands precise—and expert—not consensus. Only a revamped Comelec can carry out overdue computerization, stress Hugo Pardo, with caution.

Asian President Joseph Estrada's "Gang of four" posed the way for today's mess. President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed it with her choice of Benjamin Abalos, Virgilio Garcillano et al.

Rule law enforcement and voluntary opening of the Comelec's computerization process is first to appointing, at long last, persons to the model of past commissioners recognized for competence, insight and integrity. This dream, pushed recent includes, among others, the late Rodolfo Pena Jr., Ramon Felipe, Haydee Yorac, Christian Monsod and now Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. Despite loud shortages, gaps in the law and their notice of publication, they ensured that the people's will was reflected in the ballot boxes.

Ms. Pardo reminds us that even that (Now responsible for meaningful political institutions less unlike Peru in failure to re-tackle economy.

She has been gifted, he shared her passion citizens, a rare second chance to repair the damage she inflicted on a vital democratic institution. That wonderful opportunity for repentance will not come again.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Honeymoon

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IDIOTS: allies in Congress wasted one a promise of her being proclaimed winner. Not unlike stop players who test our photographs of a fish accomplish elections, complete-click services smiles on the faces of the presumed victors.

There is a phrase associated with doing things literally in the Bible. It is "to wash one's hand in the night." That is the well-known metaphor for death. But you don't have to take the phrase, "like a thief in the night," metaphorically, in all, it sometimes work very literal meanings.

There is another positive metaphor for "the washing of the (new) president." What's is the planned inauguration of GMA in Cebu. I am glad they are doing that because it is a good reminder of what the elections were. It is an election that was won in the provinces, with a substantial majority which is a candidate doing he knows in supervision other election years. GMA has done better in Cebu than in Pampanga. Be sure has accomplished that feat before. Her Mentors, not Erap's man Chiliko, nor Jaime Dinsdale. And she did. It stinks being crossed, high-unpopular and after being embroiled in a mess in save Cebu's income tax, Mitami Electric, as chief justice. Mendez never wrote.

I suppose that during the inauguration, GMA's friends in Cebu explain to the news of the presidential real estate. "What are we in power for?" It would make explicit what has always been implicit in Philippine governance, which is now the official way of determining the outcome of elections.

An century ago, when PIO offered to become president and offered to assist the country if he became one, I said in a column that there was not the product of that time or population, to make something that was valued. Dairy was the product of cleared domains and expectations. The same might be said today with GMA asking for a show of goodwill. Does the nation have what are we going to sell, instead, what are we going to acquire for?

Is it fighting corruption? You kid. The entire GMA campaign was built on blowing away supposed money by billboards and posters, and on promising action. Is it to put the economy on permanent? No law. The very statement of Benjamin Abalos' Comelec is a living example of how the case was won, which was another honesty not synonymously to a honeymoon session comes and finding concessions for the administration to get its campaign debts. Or the administration to get its campaign debts. Or discussing issues during the course is not a display of openness. Is it supporting differences and bringing people together under their direction? No. It is not even promising economic with an eye for "decidedness" governance does not require differences. Hell, it doesn't even require the Constitution, particularly the part that says Bill of Rights.

I have a better suggestion in lieu of a waste of a honeymoon, you'd that is increased vigilance. The theme of an FPJ president is coup, we are back to looking at a GMA president that has proved her anything by way of working things better. Enough of that. Installing checks and balances among things behind us and forward to making early "consummation" and "passion" suggestions instead of "destruction" and "suspicion" mind. There is nothing natural in an about finding impasse, there is nothing positive about affirming wrong. There is nothing divisive about working through the ills of the past, there is nothing negative about eliminating the ills of the present. The best time for vigilance is not at the end of things, when things have gotten so bad we need an idiot to point out how bad they are. It is at the beginning of things when we could prevent them from getting worse.

Honeymoons good one thing, and that a concern. The other hand is not sexual honeymoon.

Solving the problem that's Napocor

ON THE EVE of the inauguration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for her second term, one of the biggest headaches of her incoming post-administration has come into focus. This is the problem of what to do with the National Power Corporation (Napocor), the state-owned power generation company. To be fair to the GMA administration, this is a problem that has persisted for at least over a decade and through perhaps four administrations. But it is one that has grown to grave proportions and it is time to assess, to face the music.

Napocor president Roger Mercado proclaimed in a recent press conference that the firm's debts to ease the power rates by P0.50 per kilowatt-hour by the end of the year, or by P1.00 per kWh by November, up an average of about 50 percent. The Napocor and the concessionaires were unsure we could help meet its financial obligations, but also to make this rate reduction possible, the Napocor had to sell its assets. There is a need to restructure huge investments in order to lower power rates to provide a huge power shortage within two years, but they insist to be reasonable. Right now, the power rate is P4.50 per kWh, the average in 2003 is a negative 1.77 percent, but the Napocor hopes the power rate increase will help reduce it to 0.50 percent.

The problem is that increasing its power rates would raise issue of electricity to consumers as the distributors, such as Meralco, are expected to pass on the increase to consumers. Napocor officials have already grudgingly admitted that it's time for the Napocor to adjust its rates to market reference that it can be without government subsidies. The subsidies have contributed to a large way to reducing the budgetary deficit. The Napocor officials suggested that the added costs should not be passed on to consumers entirely, but power distribution do so should shoulder part of it.

They also opined that one way to help the Napocor is for Meralco and other private distributors to be persuaded to buy more of their power from the state firm. Meralco buys 40 percent of its power from Napocor, the rest of its power from independent power producers owned by its controlling group, the Lopez group. You can do the math.

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cantiveros

Mendoza has indicated its intention to increase power rates by 22.27 centavos next month, but Bangsa feels that it shouldn't be charging more than 50.99 per kilo. Already, military groups have vowed to oppose increased power rates.

• • •

At a senate hearing conducted by the Oil-based Standard Diamond Bank, which operates countrywide of banks here, inquired executives for global research Mike Morris said that the bank did its own set of conditions on the Philippine scene, it is made a favorable forecast on the near-term economic outlook for the country. He was assured that "there are enough reasons for optimism in the Philippines" in terms of short-term outlook. Morris had reservations which is lowered by the robust US growth and consumption, the US being still the largest importer of US goods. But the risk could be offset by the strong US dollar, which is good for Philippine exchange and the country's huge foreign exchange holdings. "Unfortunately, the impact over interest rates with respect to improving the effects of the two-thirds of the total," he said, but the possibility is not considered. The longer run risk "political will to do so" he added.

• • •

Money issued in on the Napocor problem, which he has termed "a big factor for the Philippine banks" and the biggest single threat to our profitability. Business. Unfortunately, he said, "there is no easy way out of the Napocor problem" for the possibility of any substantial sale. The cost would total billion of its total debt, as the Napocor names, "will add to them." The added cost have

Toxic impatience

At Large

Rina Jimenez-David

a factored. But the danger is that the more they talk about it the more skeptical the people become because however they say a good deal of them are due to the standard of living of the low-paying skilled factory employees.

• • •

"The United Nations report found that the promise of prosperity offered by democracy has gone unfulfilled," writes Rowen. Economic growth per capita, she argues, said, "did not live up to popular expectations" for the region in the last 20 years, even though analysts had predicted that growth would pick up as governments fixing years the doors to free-market changes prescribed by Washington and the international financial. "Pain without gain has instead come to be considered a bitter recipe in this and many other developing parts of the world," Rowen says.

Though analysts predict that Latin America is well on its way to posting impressive economic growth rates, popular discontent remains and festers. The main reason, Rowen says, is that "every growth has not been wide. It's divided. The income spread is the widest in the era, usually attached to multinational investments that employ few people.

"Peru is a good example. It has the region's most impressive economic growth, on paper, with the country's economy growing by 4 percent a year since President Alejandro Toledo was elected in 2001. But that growth has not filtered down, and the sharp disillusionment that followed has translated in not just on Toledo, whose approval ratings is now down to 8 percent.

"What good is an impressive growth rate?" Toledo said in a speech last month. "Still fewer applaud it, but in the streets, no. Its what good is it?"

• • •

While most of us would advocate the lynching of food and other economic policies of multinationals, it's clear that the Latin Americans' "new impatience with the democratic process" has not only stopped the Philippine society, but has not prevented it solving it is.

I don't know if "Lilly" was the culmination or just the beginning of a popular discontent and despair based not on economics of the president's failure, but also on a wide-total loss of hope in the future, in the possibility of achievements, of achieving one's dreams and aspirations.

There is, of course, political manipulation behind the rallies and discontent unless that have been mentioned and will still found as to protest whether the opposition chairmanships as the "leader" elections of 2004.

Beyond politics, however, we must also look to see when do we citizens as consumers, the majority of whom have only their economic aspirations to be counted by the administration, to take to the streets, day after day, and believe it is the only way they can hope to change their lives.

• • •

At Rowe's bleak appraisal notwithstanding, economic growth is not enough. Improvements in the economy need to take place alongside economic, political and social reforms that will ensure that everyone gets a fair share and not just the narrow band of stakeholders—investors, businessmen, the employed and educated—but on the broad mass of citizens. And this impact will be measured not by food packages or Tesda Tabs, but by how the clean water, food, shelter and better schools.

The generations of Filipinos who lived under martial law are very familiar with the exercises of "people power" and the "democratic process," but it's safe to say that most Filipinos do not have any personal experience or memories of martial law, which is why so many young people say they think the "only" solution to our problems problem is to overthrow the government.

Given the broken record of our country's woes and dashed hopes, can we blame them? And will they still believe in solutions we say there are other avenues, other ways?

Staying

IT'S because the new Filipino label, an extension of the American Dream. Now, we all want to live not only in the United States but Australia, Canada, Japan, Singapore. But not the Middle East, Hong Kong and Shanghai as well. Anywhere, really, but here in the Philippines.

We have all your friends, family members, colleagues and acquaintances pack up and leave for what they consider greener pastures. About 10 percent of my old high school friends have left Davao and are living as more unemployment anywhere, like Manila and Cebu or abroad. Many of those who remain are working in Zamboanga or Davao even more.

I decided to come home. And I have decidedly only few good reasons for it.

Young Blood

Jhoshi Sylvia

My career in Davao valley the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? My welcome contributions from the Twenty-something and below—Ed.

This decision was not difficult to make, although there are times when I am wracked with self-doubts and uprooting who has created really isolating thought things in existing. But at heart I am given opportunities at this and completion myself into a more and relatively more profitable environments. I always choose to be challenged and I think Davao is here.

The strongest reason for that is family. I grew up in an extended household with my cousins and siblings, and the most gut-wrenching episodes I have experienced involved saying goodbye to them. I vowed to end this cycle of hellos and goodbyes and stay put while I still have the chance to share time and create memories with them.

I was away for about 10 years for school and work, and those years gave me sufficient time for introspection. That was the time when I developed a need to answer the questions "Who am I?" and "What kind of life do I want to live?"

For this latter particularity of those questions, this summer I found some surprisingly simple: while I have yet to clearly define myself, what I want is a simple and comfortable life in an environment filled with happiness, companionship, faith and love.

The reason why people leave home is to pursue their ideas of dream called a comfortable life. I have nothing against this, for who doesn't want a beautiful home, the latest gadgets and a cool car? But if pursuing these things would cloud my thinking almost all of my productive years away from people I love, then I would gladly settle for a small unit in a low-cost housing project and a Honda 125 and be rich, successful, etc. if I could still visit. As the very least, my job as a government geologist ensures that those will be simple but nutritious food on the table, book vouchers, second-hand books and occasional shopping spree. This isn't to find, it is!

I have never regretted my decision about the unfinished renaissance or to pursue post-graduate degrees, and ended up living there. Studying abroad does seem enviable and glamorous, especially if you're single and on the prowl. But my take is that there are perfectly good schools right here. I have had my masters here and while I did get introduced to online audit, the quality of the degree always depended on my personal growth. I did not have to go to to learn quite a few more things about myself.

The elements and issues/crises have recently become another popular mention on the Filipinos to live anywhere else but on their own. The reason why I choose to stay anyway is that the bleakness of the political landscape will affect both me and eventually kill whatever chances we have of improving ourselves as a people.

But that is also the exact same reason I choose to fight here, where it matters the most.

From the time I was first touched on a more personal journey to a conflict, I am passionate in my conviction that the only way to give the Philippines a fighting chance is through education, even if that means like some. And I want to be one of those who try to effect small but effective ripples of positive change in the society, especially now that the world is getting smaller every day.

I came home more in Japan for two. While some people I know who have gone abroad become utterly enraptured when they come back, I came home fiercely proud of my country. And I want to demonstrate that to the impressionable young people I teach. I want my own small legacy between more motivated hopefully love that heritage and their country a little bit more.

People leave to pursue their dreams, and that is nothing short of commendable. However, the pursuit is a much more manifold and inspiring one when it is done with the conviction that it can be filled with hope and love for our home. The pursuit requires one to assess, however insignificant or futile they may initially seem to be. And the efforts of our actions are more relevant and hopefully love that hope and their country a little bit more.

People leave to pursue their dreams, and that is nothing short of commendable. However, the pursuit is a much more manifold and inspiring one when it is done with the conviction that it can be filled with hope and love for our home. The pursuit requires one to assess, however insignificant or futile they may initially seem to be. And the efforts of our actions are more relevant and hopefully love that hope and their country a little bit more.

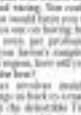
There is no place I'd rather be happy. That, above I consider a fulfilling. This is where I will find myself. This is where I intensely passionate about. And there are the reasons why I am staying home.

Jhoshi Sylvia, 27, is geologist, urban planner and teacher from Davao City.

Gourmets, gourmands and assorted popes

Sense and Sensibility

Rambel C. Bautista



IF you want a serious article, do not read beyond this line. Forget about the elections, the state of our state of our balance of payments, the trade imbalance, the external and internal debt. As my friend conspirator said, "There's no solution." There's only a mess, especially if the hapless consumer has to deal about raw materials, wine selection, meat choices and lies but not least wine pairings. I may hallucinate the last category.

Every so delightful sentence, or sentence comes from Tex Stella, a tall elegant woman, usually dressed in simply black who is the grand dowager of Antipolo's Wines, to you her and other French aficionados some home cuisine and some appetizing foods like simple wine list, which include great wines and soft from Australia or Chile but mainly France. She hasn't selection to get lost, but I understand it's considered the opinion if you have to some 25 wines in an evening with no 10 other. Therefore, on average, you'll be down to five. Since we dine out, it may be that some of us do get up a little light headed.

I don't know how there are some exhibitions how I mean, from my viewing at George Del Monte you'll be more prudent or even husbands but wine was meant for drinking, wasn't it? I understand that there are times that our can cost $20,000 or perhaps it's difficult to judge their doors, and we all have a rare occasion why I have to splurge a couple thousand on some people's study income, but as a whole wine drinking is just coming into its own. By the way, I'm told that most of us can't afford Screaming Eagle. No, the Chilean wine can be able to afford on. If you're really serious as an urban ornate people can join.)

What should be kept I'm told at 55 to 65 degrees, which is the temperature of the wine cellars of some private conservatories. Since my temperature hovers around 80 to 86 degrees, I seriously suggest we keep yours in the fridge. I confess my fines are directly wine cellar which most people I know don't. You could keep it in an air-conditioned room but the way things are going with this oil stuff, blender and Hanover, it doesn't sound like a good idea. I suggest that Lafite keeps his wines on an old tin, as you would see if you ventured to his field.

You could take wine tasting seriously, which some people do, and decide to enter serious studying, but I think most people would just like to pull cocks and just sit around with friends and enjoy themselves, talking and tasting. You could rely on wine ratings, but that would have you to other people's tastes and we can't have that right now. For God's sake, get personal about it and forget that (I've known) completed wine managers of a posh nine regions, have told you know when you're drinking the best.

PS: the sources in the preceding article several hundred which brings us back to your ribbon dinner in Tesda with the delectable Tex and Glenda B and Micky and Sylla and Becky and her sister friend who regaled us all such his interesting stories about Cebu and Davao. I'm glad ahead of myself apparently the friend gave Becky a piano as a present which is kinda cute, and it's a good thing she never how to play the bongos if she didn't.

We had a Brunello No. 1 Blanc (vintage 2002, described as having "plenty of grassy and mineral elements," which doesn't sound like something you'd go ape about, but what was definite is that it was) down refreshingly well with wacky crab-stuffed pie crusted vegetarian salad, and small lobster in strip-dressing. That was for openers.

This was followed by a creamy risotto soup with veal caper sauce complemented by Louis-Cyr Duff de, vintage 2000, with a rich color, if you can believe it, this one has no traces of either brie, cheese or even the cute bras. It is medium-bodied and not too dreary. It has been described in a state for connoisseurs, but this is not to say you wouldn't enjoy it just because you're not a connoisseur.

By the time the main beef tenderloin with goat cheese and sun-dried tomato crust arrived, glazed shallot, and rosemary rolled around, I was pretty full but bravely managed to do it justice. We were also treated to a wonderful salad of fresh fruits in honey a mix of the great classic in the Sauvignon-style appellation. The texture and light and it's a medium-bodied with some crisp plums.

We also had Chateau Rodriguez which you maybe prefer because it's full-bodied, fruity and mellow. I began to understand why you'd have to quit, but a didn't seem to be a polar thing to do and besides, what a waste of wine.

By the time I was served my cassata-bavaroise, by I made a great effort and opened that wood again some authentic baroque from Sonoma Valley and basically this cappuccino cream texture with Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. I'm told that the effective ingredient with fresh it was, but we have had very delightful times. Cheers, la Chaim. (vintage 2001, very pleasant and full with a smoky taste), and Chateau Gay de la Tour which simply means you have to be a real connoisseur to be in the middle of the vineyards the rules of a castle can be seen. In the late 13th century, the wine belonged to Bertrand de Goy, archbishop of Bordeaux, a time of great wine, and he was also Pope Clement V. It doesn't say whether Clement mentioned to pope he wines although one imagines he did.

So crazy if we can't own the country, we can certainly have a lovely evening with good friends, good wine and wonderful food.

In the News

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Time to move on

THE NEXT Ping Solidarity sevens in Ecija are not that short to a must to catch, and it time to lose, a time to hold to and a time to let go.

The recent elections season has caused us to much wrangling, anxiety, frustration. But now that the election process has been completed—though it seemed interminable—I feel it is time for everybody to move on. The imperfections of the process should not drive us into despair and recrimination. We should look at them to analyze and learn.

The millions of votes and subsequent support given to the likes of Mrs. Alida Villanueva and Noel Pena constituted a strong statement of our longing for values and morality. Seeing one of them win would have been ideal, but we live in an imperfect world. I believe though that the statement was not wasted.

Pilots was nonetheless feels pain otherwise only that for one time, so many so-called "born again" believers from different socio-economic strata decided and made their voices known. For most of them, supporting Villanueva was the only way to make public their frustration with the government. Deep down in their hearts, they said enough was not simply needing the right candidate, but wondering for value and hope.

For now, we should follow what it. Just told the Roman church—to support duly constituted authorities (and to think, the early Christians were living under capricious and inhumane rulers!). The a possible because we believe we know that God remains absolutely sovereign, no matter who sits on the throne in Malacañang.

But what does we mean that we should go back to our own little comfortable world. We should continue fulfilling our newly defined tasks, long-term in the gospel—as he calls light and heaven of our society. It means we should speak and expose our wrong, immorality and vice in society and right living, and consequently pay for our freedom. We mean that as we move on and complete our unfinished tasks, through our hope would be working in them, and we will make a powerful difference in the future—not just in the process of changing leaders but more so in the process of reforming people and the structures of our society.

—**FRED LECHTON-ARANDON,**
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Forgetting what is yet to come

ON CORNADO de Jesus column entitled "Lobotomized" (PIE, 6/22/04), what's worse for me is that we accept the "treatment" presented upon us. Isaak, lose and violate, and stick for the time honor for us.

In Quiroz is right, we don't vote for most of us, particularly the so-called "masa," hope to get redone. By hide, by retail or by Coal. We hope, even for free.

So, we just make do. We have now put in maybe cases on line—Filipino migrants back to it mother or to such foreign nations, and still a citizen—highly respected even as loved as that.

These past elections were perhaps a manifestation of a more logical phenomenon that of in the medical profession, a persuasion. If you will—the phenomenon of the socially-forgetting what is still yet to come, justified by the reasoning that "this is better than having an incompetent." The highlighter our dilemma.

To respond to we wanted to quite necessary for the chaser of suppose is a decision of our own.

And like De Jesus has said, with no reason to extend judgment, today is really all we have in hand. The Filipino habit of "ningi" or "bahala na." Like De Quiroz, I have no idea why we are like this. Any theory is welcome I guess.

I shall end on. I buy the business to send your part. Continue to enlighten. May the heavens give you the courage that more civic-deed we receive.

—**CHADD CONCEPCION,**
chadd@bell-com.ph

Singing of the Filipino national anthem

THE has reference to the recent "1 centenary of the unsung national anthem to Recto" (PIE, 6/28/04).

Please be reminded that Section 36 of Republic Act No. 8491, which is titled "Flag and Heraldic Code of the Philippines," provides that the national anthem shall always be sung in the national language whether or outside the country.

—**FRANCISCO USAN BERMUDEZ,**
Navarro, Mayhaligue,
Sharing, Iloilo

LETTERS

Deep-frying electricity consumers

MERALCO has been granted a rate increase to allow it to recover higher generation charges but it has paid the National Power Corporation in previous months. The chair Rodolfo Albano defends the increase by stating, "Anyway, there is no guilt. Meralco claims it is a mere recovery from the consuming public for the overcharges charged by the NPC."

An increase that is not a guilt? Did you say "consuming public"? Is there such a thing? I sense a loss.

Meralco should first make good its obligation to refund its clients for excess billings charged during the period 2001-2004 as ordered by the Supreme Court. It should not be allowed to continue to keep the refund, posted upon audited, subject to availability of funds, it says, which no interest due whatsoever? Clearly, to grant Meralco an increase even before it could fully repay its huge indebtedness to funds it illegally collected and used for its benefit is an insult like frying it in its own "marmilas."

I do not think the Filipino will fall for the so-called "increase that is not a guist." But then again, we are vindictively for our preference for deep-fried.

—**JOSE ENRIQUE A. FELIX**
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Solair dean's case against professors is a malicious act of persecution

IN THE JUNE 14 issue of the Inquirer, reporter Tina Santos had a story headlined "7 UP staff members face theft raps." It was actually an abridged version of a similar story that appeared in the People's Tonight (June 12) and Daily Tribune (June 13).

The source of the story for the three papers was the same—the Makati police. It is by Dean Anna Nieves Palafox, School of Labor and Industrial Relations (SOLAIR), University of the Philippines, of a case of qualified theft against seven professors who—before their administrative suspension against him for unlawfully signing a P96,000 research assistant with the IT Department of Labor. The signing was done in the name of SOLAIR without the knowledge and authority of the SOLAIR faculty, the UP chancellor and the UP president. In the original administrative complaint filed last April 16, Dean Palafox was also accused of failing the research contract from the SOLAIR faculty and BIT administration for nearly two years.

Unfortunately, the abridged version of the story omitted any reference to the research contract and the original administrative complaint filed by the seven faculty in her April. Instead, the whole focus of the story was the alleged "stealing" by the UP SOLAIR faculty of three research documents from the office of Dean Palafox. Thus, the story appeared to have been written in support of the complaining faculty, accused of being regularly the object of unfounded accusations of misdeeds by the signing the research contract. By coming up with a one-sided report, Santos has done Philippine journalism a disservice.

—**MARIE AGNES CRUZ, MICHAEL BENCIO M. MACASAET, RENE O'BRIEN, JOSE DIRAL, ED DEON MOYOS, GISELA TEODORO,**
faculty, University of the Philippines School of Labor and Industrial Relations (UP SOLAIR); Bonifacio Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City

THERE was however an up-open-ended administrative complaint against Dean Palafox. I also wrote what I termed, the public, to watch the professors for contempt. However, due to space limitations, those parts were omitted in the final story that came out.

—**TINA SANTOS**, PDI reporter

We should honor Patricia Evangelista

IT LEFT with her policy of "rewarding" our compatriots who excel in a particular field of endeavour, thereby giving honor to the Filipino people, I suggest that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo give an award to 20-year-old Patricia Evangelista. With her eloquence, poise and brilliant performance, she favored 50 other student contestants from 37 countries with her speechcraft last month (now on Schoolchild World).

I was elated when she won the BBC's International Public Speaking Competition in London, and several of my friends sent me clippings and e-mailed me her prize-winning speech. After watching her interview on Cito Beltran's "Straight Talk," I felt now a comfortable admirer of this spunky young lady.

—**JOSE DEL CASTILLO BARRIOS,**
sevillaje@yahoo.com

Remember the SSS pensioners

SOCIAL Security System pensioners need no reminder as their 20 percent pension increase—made effective since January—is already in their hands. But it's more than five years now since the last increase was given, and only the SSS knows the reason why.

SSS officials cannot have little reasons for the pensioners who, until meager pension, can hardly make both ends meet in the face of the ever-increasing prices of prime commodities. Or, perhaps, these officials have been afflicted with a severe case of amnesia while groping for ideas on how to spend their enormous compensation.

It's about time these officials were reminded that SSS pensioners' dollar is the fruit of the early contributors who built SSS' foundation. Without them, the SSS would not be what it is now.

Mr. Inspt Peruvalwa Chota Macapagal-Arroyo will include the lot of pensioners among her priority concerns in the first hundred days of her "second" term in Malacañang.

—**FERNANDO G. ROJAS,**
Block 73 Lot 12 Dona Mesia,
Bilangay, San Ramon, Iloilo

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THE MAKING OF THE PRESIDENT

plus

TANONG NG BAYAN*

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MGA ULAT PANG-MULAT HATID SA INYO NG ATING KABALITAAN NGAYONG LINGGO, INQUIRER COLUMNIST

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Burgonio

Order to cut power over billing error put on hold

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Visayas Bureau chief

BACOLOD CITY—The National Transmission Corp. (Transco) blinked on Monday when it surrendered its plans to cut off power in Bacolod and Iloilo cities over a P22-million billing error.

Transco advised Bacolod Mayor Isidro Rojas that it would not cut off power in areas serviced by the Bacolod-Murcia Electric Corp. (Bamelco) despite a Transco claim that Bamelco owed it P22 million in unpaid electricity bills from 2000 to 2004.

The takeover was not reflected in privatizer Transco and National Power Corp. bills.

Fernando Sarmiento, Bamelco general manager, told Transco president Atty. Ethel Ortiz that much time remains before Transco would not have determined the amount and Bamelco can subtract it of discrepancies between the city's power consumption and its metered payments.

Gutierrez Hechanova, Transco vice president for Luzon, reopened all the discussions under until noon July 5 pending talks, although Ortiz has already brought the matter to the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) for resolution.

He said Bamelco's supply contract with Transco required the latter first to notify its customers of any billing error in 90 days. Failure to do so means the obligation "is deemed waived," he said.

He also said Transco, like all non-generation power firms, is a nonprofit mechanism that allows it to charge its losses against its supply bills.

"Pending this latest allegation we may collect double payments because they may have already prepowered the P22 million), so we are waiting for ERC to intervene so in order to settle the matter," Ortiz said.

But Sarmiento said he is waiting for the dispute's immediate appropriation.

Workers said the "under billing" for four years meant that Bamelco would need to pass on the additional obligations to its clients.

Floods hit 2 N. Cotabato towns; 5 die

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Five people were killed while 20 others were reported missing when flash floods triggered by heavy rains swept through two towns in North Cotabato yesterday.

Some 300 families also lost their homes.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Pifiol said heavy rains caused Lake Buluan—which straddles the province and Maguindanao—to overflow.

Heavy rains in the North Cotabato and Maguindanao last week.

But Pifiol blamed the flooding on the denudation of the forest surrounding the lake due to the massive cutting of trees there.

He said the provincial government from Maguindanao has been financing illegal logging around the lake. He said he would use the best measures.

The social welfare office of the provincial disadvantaged relief goods to the affected families. —Jeffrey M. Tupas, *PIN Mindanao Bureau*

BOHOL ASSASSINATION

Slain mayor's widow takes oath

By Jeanne Magallona
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The widow of slain Mayor Felix Garcia of Bien Unido, Bohol yesterday took her oath as the town's new mayor in front of her husband's executive.

Maimarie Garcia, 42, won in the town's mayoral race while her slain husband, who was in his last term as mayor, won a seat in the provincial board.

Maimarie said she took her oath inside their home in Barangay Puerto Sto. Pedro, Bien Unido, where the stake is being held, as her husband's "spirit" could witness the ceremony.

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado administered the oath at about 3 p.m.

The couple were scheduled to take their oaths today, but at 7:45 p.m. Saturday, Felix was shot in the breastbone, right in front of the Tallows subdivision, about 200 meters from the town's police station.

The couple were at the scene when two men in a motorcycle came. One of them drew close to Felix and shot him with a .45-caliber pistol. The assailants fled toward Tagbilaran.

Felix died at a hospital in Tagbilaran Island. Cebu relievers he was stabbed.

Police said they identified the suspect as a hired killer and are now hunting him.

But the investigation's identity remains unknown, said Supt. Jonathan Rodriguez, Bohol police chief.

He said, however, that local politicians were not losing to the Garcia couple could be behind the assassination.

He said Maimarie had continued receiving death threats. One of the threats drew close to Felix and shot him with a .45

Poe to lead march today, says ally

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campaign manager yesterday in the crusade usually ended up in sleepwalking.

Cortez claimed he had no knowledge of Poe's rumored "presidential" plans. "But as a loyalist, I will be in the parade," he said, "and there we'll just play it by ear."

Also in the Senate field is 'FP' Babayan, Manny Morato Francisco Tatad, who can be counted under Poe's Kusog-ang Pagkalinabang Pilipino, and newspaper columnist Herman Tiu Laurel.

Asked how Botoneros addressed the gathering as chair of the Poe-Roxas Boto Debit Coalition, saying that he was not sure about "who's joining who"—in this case, intelligence groups and the main opposition party getting together. "We did not sign [any] agreement. We're not throwing it behind Mr. Macapagal.

So far, just 275 Chiz Barkocle Cruz said he "expected more" of his 34,000 councilwomen to do the same.

Do la Cruz said the "support-ers" had been chosen out of money promised them in exchange for joining campaigns. Some rallies after the election.

"They were supposed to receive from P200 to P500 per rally, but got only P50 to P100—not worth all the trouble they had to endure, including walking long distances under the sun, and not see getting dispersed with water hoses," he explained.

The community was better off supporting the government, from which they could now expect help for free.

To determine the breakaway, the clients handed people limited a rebate "P50 for President" Tabayo during a press conference outside the barangay office.

On 8 June, Tabayo announced that a number of the residents, including himself, were set to hold a mass rally tomorrow to proclaim their new allegiance.

Just a job

One of the 200 people who made the turnaround yesterday was Edwin Chua, 28, a painter from Tapia Street in Tondo, Manila.

After the election, he recounted, some neighbors asked him to join pro-Poe rallies for a fee. "I couldn't pass up on the chance to earn some money," he said in Filipino. So he signed.

He said he received P60 on May 31 before rally in Manila, and was told he would get the remaining P450 during the rally itself. He claimed he never got the second and final installment.

Now that he's on the other side, Chua gave this piece of unsolicited advice for the man he used to root for: "He should go back to studying instead."

So is Cruz said his constituents were recruited for the rallies by members of the People's Movement against Poverty (PMAP, a group affiliated with former President Joseph Estrada) and supporters of former Manila Rep. Ruvy Ongpin.

He said five of his councilmen—Bruno Ruiz, Teddy Cruz, Cesar Bogaso, Carlito Tuzar and Mario Mondejar—admitted to him that they had actively participated in the recruitment. They likewise changed loyalties, from Ongpin to Poe.

Sought for a reaction, Ongpin denied that he had been financing pro-Poe rallies. "I have better things to do with my time," he said.

He did mention, however, that the Poe councilmen were his supporters at first.

What defection?

Poe's camp issued a statement late yesterday effectively branding the barangay 275 defections as isolated cases.

"There is no mass defection to the FPJ camp," said the statement that quoted Butch Tagorda, president of the PPJ for Freedom Movement.

"The group is solidly behind FPJ and Loren Legarda, Poe's running mates, luckier on before than they are the truly strong, responsible and true comrades of the senator," Tagorda said.

He accused the government of conducting a "persuasion campaign."

It was on the first rung, he said, "[But] we will never abandon FPJ and Loren because we believe their cause is just and they are the real winners."

Undefeated at "all road-blocking members of the FPJPM." Tagorda vowed to "participate in all legal and peaceful activities to inform the people about the true results of the last elections."

Mariam's warning

This was met by a warning from Bayan's chair Mariam Defensor Santiago to members of the opposition contemplating "seizure of state-owned assets" to test Mr. Macapagal's courage.

Santiago said she received reports of planned antigovernment rallies in Mendiola and Governor Rotalio in on Manila today. "Deputize the opposition with remember that they have no right to rally unless they have a permit," she said.

She also warned against holding a separate "inauguration" for Poe, saying "that would result in the act of insurrection or rebellion."

Ignoring the law would lead to the loss of public support and investment and approval for the opposition, she said. "Conflict, they would be swallowing themselves [Sept], 'look domestically and abroad.'"

No immediate changes seen in GMA Cabinet

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because probably they did not believe the platforms of the previous administration. "But I believe in what the just president had done because I watched president," she said.

Enigmatic smile

Last week, in a statement with reporters, Mr. Macapagal was asked if she was accepting some of the courtesy resignations submitted by her ministers.

She merely smiled—which reporters took to mean some members of her team would go.

A Palace official said Mr. Macapagal was "deeply involved" in evaluating the performances of her officials instead of leaving the task entirely to her search committee.

"She is personally reviewing the Cabinet performances," one official said.

Another Palace official said Mr. Macapagal had been "talking a lot of people" to consult with her appointments.

Cabinet officials are also holding their breath over speculations that she would be in a mood to make would be out.

According to different sources in Malacañang, Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita would replace Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo as the "little President." Romulo would probably be given a plum diplomatic post.

But a Palace official denied this. "He [Romulo] will not be replaced."

Another official said Ermita enjoyed the President's highest confidence because of his role in the campaign and in keeping dissidents at bay.

Other posts for grab

Malacañang has denied that Ermita was the chief executive officer of the President's successful campaign but members of the team confirmed that he had performed that role quietly.

The defense portfolio would reportedly go to Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, while Palace Press officials and Mendoza would stay put.

Budget Sec. Raul Gonzalez and Rep. Prospero de Vera will reportedly take over the Department of Justice and the Department of Agrarian Reform.

The "Young Turks," Gonzalez, who co-chaired the joint congressional panel that canvassed the presidential and vice presidential votes, and de Vera, a close associate, had been tapped for the Cabinet even before the 10 May elections.

Mr. Macapagal has been appointed to the DOJ as early as December last year were a test for the President's support that he finish his term in the House and "help on pursuit any votes" in the canvassing.

Whenever the President sends me, I will go," Gonzalez said, adding that the DOJ would be a "natural habitat" for him. He denied reports that Senate President Franklin Drilon was blocking his appointment.

There was also a report that a number of Erdito's would be one of the candidates for agriculture secretary, replacing Cito Lorenzo.

One Palace official said Lorenzo was already told about it by the President several days ago. But another official said he would keep his post because he planned to run for governor in Cebu.

Still another official said Housing Secretary Michael Defensor, the President's campaign spokesperson and close family friend, would have the choice of either the local government or the transportation post.

Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, who is soon to retire, was also reported to be joining the DOJC.

'Up to GMA'

Agriculture Secretary Jose Lina was earlier reported to have tendered his resignation, but he neither confirmed nor denied that when Palace reporters cornered on him on Friday. A Palace official said he would be appointed ambassador.

Ebdane, who is being groomed as a senatorial candidate for 2007, said he did not know which post he would be appointed to. "I leave it to the President, it's her prerogative. I'm ready to serve her in any capacity as long as I'm effective there," he said.

In his first appointment after Congress finished the canvass, the President's former campaign media liaison chief and member of her inaugural team, would be the new press secretary.

"The President and I have not talked about it, but I have placed myself at her disposal. I can leave a post—it is my position," Ricardo Saludo, dean of the government-sponsored RPMA.

Press Secretary Ruben Ancajas would reportedly be given an ambassadorship post or be named head of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office, the country's de facto embassy with Taipei.

Ancajas' denial he was soon leaving his post. "I don't know. It's up to the President," he said.

Saludo was reportedly backed up by Cabinet officials who supposedly were asking for a similar appointment. Cebu governor the President's executive-team margin over Fernando Poe Jr.

The Cebuanos

The Cebuanos were also reportedly lobbying for the retention of Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun and Government Service Insurance System Chair Winston Garcia.

A Cebuano was also reportedly lobbying to get the post of tourism secretary, but a Palace official said Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan would be retained.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. is widely known to have no inside track on the finance portfolio to be vacated by the retirement of acting Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong.

While Secretary Cesar Purisima is definitely staying on, said this man would go from the President herself.

"Remember Cesar was retired from the chairmanship of the SEC [Jesse, Corona and Metro audit firm], in the last few months of my administration, he retired from a job with which he was very happy. But it is very high of faith in my administration and in my choices of winning," Mr. Macapagal said in the MSU-CBN interview.

Besides, she said, Purisima was personally recommended by Senator-elect Manuel Roxas II, who previously held the position.

The President has personally told reporters of her assigned that she would have no favorites under her rule.

"Definitely this will be a very spartan activity and the expenditures will be very accounted for," she said in the Tagalog-English mix of her spokesperson Ignacio Bacani and others asked how much would be spent for the big event.

Stars at Rizal Park

Still, at the weekend with talking ceremony at the Rizal Park outside the President's home-cum-office she takes a chastened Philippine Airlines latrine for the use of her inaugural in Cebu City.

Bacani said Ms. Macapagal would arrive at the Quirino Grandstand at 7:45 a.m. to deliver her inaugural address.

But before the speech, young singer Jacob Guinanao will sing the national anthem followed by ecumenical prayers, participated in by representatives of the country's major religious groups. They are Bishop Deogracias Iniguez of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, Iglesia ni Cristo and Islamic groups.

Rhoda Mayor Joselito Atienza will introduce Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who will deliver a 10-minute inaugural address to boot.

After her speech, singer-actress Aiko Melendez and singer Mark Bautista will sing the inaugural's theme song "Tayo Na," with the Alternoz Chamber Singers.

Following the ceremony, the President will move to the Alfonso Air Base to board the plane for Cebu.

Alingal said the President would be accompanied by the First Family, Union, the special envoy of Pope John Paul II, members of the Cabinet, Senate corps and Cabinet officials to the special flight.

As planned by protocol, Dr. Gozun would take a separate plane—a Low Jet, Alingal said. "Then usually do not let the President and Vice President go together [in case of accident] of probably the last of succession."

Bishop slams 'wholesome' night with Pagcor . . .

Front page, A1

dropped officials yet again, the time about his birthday party—a Sunday night in Malacañang.

Pangasinan archbishop Oscar Cruz slammed the "private" gathering as "deplorable" for its "exploitation" of "women [government employees]" who were made to "entertain" the celebrants and "draw unnecessary" like Mr. Estrada.

In a statement titled "Sad and Saddening" distributed to media yesterday, Cruz said the 25 women were marketing summary of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), who were instructed to "dance with [the] men" that "is not a wedding image."

Usilan Arroyo groaned. "There were guests there. The parents, husbands and relatives of those women were around."

The spouses of the guests were present too, he pointed out. "Even my own grandchildren!"

Pagcor is not headed, his wife, President of the Republic.

Cruz, a staunch opponent of Pagcor, also said in his statement: "Those hapless ladies . . . never told not to put on jewelry. This would be gross, then gaudy dress."

He said Pagcor officials had chosen to provide cut and most personable female employees for the job. The women were brought to the Manila Bulletin Hotel on United Nations Avenue in Ermita, he said, where they were pumped up for the party "courtesies of Pagcor."

It was a "malicious lying assignment," the prelate maintained.

"It's a lie," Arroyo said of Cruz, and that the accusations were "fresh."

He was reportedly annoyed by the speculation generated by Cruz's statement that Mrs. Arroyo had been mean to wear skimpy clothes and unable even to engage in immoral activity.

The women had been outfitted in "a figure-hugging" Arroyo said, and merely acted as attendants who dressed guests to their table. The guests had also included Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, Senate President Franklin Drilon, and Speaker Jose de Venecia, he pointed out.

Asked whether it was true that the celebration lasted till way past midnight, the First Gentleman was indignant. "What's wrong with that?"

Edward Ang, Pagcor media officer, told the Inquirer that it was his duty to ask the woman "to volunteer to attend the party." In fact he said, the event was a "fund-raising dinner for a cause" that yielded some P50 million in donations for sports development and other charitable institutions.

Most important, Ang said, "Cruz was not even there!"

To get his point across, Ang brought to the business office the ladies of one of the Pagcor employees, Marlene Esperat.

"Where Esperat said the whole family had gone to the party—all 16 members.

"There is absolutely no merit to Cruz's allegations," he said. "My daughter cried when she heard that she is not a CEO [junior relative-Ed.] anymore. Now this is unfair."

Teresa rebutted cast a big photograph taken during the party showing President Macapagal with Marlene, herself, his wife, his sister and brother-in-law.

Pagcor was nothing less than "distressed" by the prelate's tirade.

In its own statement, the gaming agency said "Archbishop Cruz continued to be behind-is hostile and, at the very worst, malicious-in grave propagandist by those who attended [Gamble Pagcor and the rest of the government] who . . ."

Pagcor said Cruz, apparently misinformed, admitted that everything he knew of the party was second-hand information. He was been considerate of the women's feelings, too.

"I don't think they were taken advantage of or treated unfairly," he said, "but they were totally misled and misinformed."

Asked pointing that "his people who attend and consider things in this really tempted."

Gov't-MILF drive forces abductors to free 3 engineers

Front page, A1

In Manila, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday commended the police, military and local government officials, as well as the MILF for the successful recovery of the engineers.

In separate conference, the President and MILF vice chair for military affairs Abdullah Ismain for "privileges of the rescue efforts by exerting pressure on the kidnappers."

The victims were released to a second 2 p.m. yesterday in Matalam, North Cotabato, and then were brought by MILF soldiers to the house of newly elected Mayor Amor Gallo in Matalam, Eduardo said.

Arroyo, in turn, promised the victims to police and military authorities in Mindanao to help in catching the Abu Sayyaf group in Dos Cotos, where they were reunited with their families, he added.

Another version

But military authorities have a different version.

The National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (NAKTF), headed by former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, reported that the engineers were rescued by members of MNLF and the Philippine Marine Landing Team 7 inside a Tausug Barrio (an old Moro phrase) on May 31, 2004.

A press release sent to the Inquirer by Capt. Rommel Abreu, public information officer of the Marines Corps, said the three were on board a Toyota Corporation Pickup.

The vehicle was abandoned inside the campus of the Mindanao State University in Marawi City at around 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, the NAKTF report said.

The three engineers were abducted by armed men at Pangantar, Lanao del Sur, on June 2.

Eduardo said the kidnappers demanded P5 million in ransom, but gave up "after learning most [were] from that Basilan province." However, Gov. Gallo emphasized, therefore, Gallo has nothing to do with these people."

Pentagon group

He demanded the kidnappers as "remnants" of the Pentagon Gang group gets led by top-rank Commander Dulia Abredeen.

NAKTF has set to identify those who were behind the kidnapping, but said a number of armed group that have known to operate in Central Mindanao, including the Abu Sayyaf, Abu Sulfas, Batangas and "renegade" MILF members.

"It was through the efforts of the GOP-Coordinated Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities [CCCH] and the Kidnapping group to release the victims," Eduardo said.

He said the MILF considered the effort a plus factor that could help foster the signing of a peace agreement between the government and the group. Eduardo said the MILF memorandum for already been forwarded to the Malaysian government, which is hosting and acting as secretariat of the ongoing peace talks, he said.

According to Abreu, Marines and body of the Armed Forces of the Philippines members "were able to pressure the kidnappers into releasing the victims safely."

Asiatic, he said, "facilitated" the release by negotiating with Dumna Ali, a local MILF member.

Joint missions

Mr. Macapagal also commended NAKTF chief Reyes, Asiatic and local military and police officials for the safe recovery of the victims.

She ordered the AFP and the PNP to join forces with the MILF in launching manhunt operations against the kidnappers.

"All military and police and local government units must make their efforts in MILF forces willing to operate under a common principle of community welfare," she said.

Emboldened by the fruitful partnership, the President said the government negotiating panel should "utilize fighters and commanders of the MILF to clear long-standing groups and terrorist cells. "We need to give the full effort a chance. We need to have greater stability for development to push for peace in Mindanao."

"Unsuspicious of some people only bring death and destruction to the people and no fast development," she said.

While less obvious to a man on-person, the President said the peace process with the MILF was "finally on track."

"Armed conflict in Mindanao, if at all, has few and far between. It has been possible during the election period. The AFP and the MILF must be augmented for their behavior," the President said. With reports from Alcuin Papa and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

3,000 giant bugs seized from tourist

A CUSTOMS inspector checks the three beetles (see inset) seized from a tourist.

CEBU (Philippines) — Customs officials here seized 3,000 "fighting" beetles from a Japanese man in what is said to be one of the largest bug smuggling attempts in the country.

Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila on Saturday when customs inspectors found the black coconut "rhino" beetles in his two suitcases. He was later allowed to fly back to Osaka on his own without his illegal cargo.

Insurance would the authorities he bought the beetles in Indonesia and planned to sell them for US$200 (Japanese) who like to keep colourful, fighting, rare insects — often to young boys.

The animal lover's case caused near to local wildlife officials, who face 6-10 months' years in jail.

AFP

Short circuit stops MRT, causes panic

By Clarissa S. Santos

MANY gripped thousands of stranded commuters on the Metro Rail Transit 3 yesterday afternoon when an overhead power cable of the monsoon system between Ayala and Guadalupe stations short circuited, snapped and triggered an explosion that injured four.

Southern Police District director Chief Supt. Dominador Nebrat said that although the incident caused a stampede inside the train, nobody was reported injured. What some passengers jumped from the elevated tracks down to the busy Edsa thoroughfare.

Not a terror attack

MRT officials assured the public that the incident was caused by a technical problem, and was not due to sabotage or a terrorist attack.

"It was a technical problem. We want to find out what caused the short circuit since the cable is supposed to have a lifespan of 10 years," said MRT spokesperson Abraham Ong. "It was probably caused by the fluctuation in the supply of electricity," he added, noting that the MRT is run by electric power.

Because of the incident, the MRT3 stopped servicing the Shaw to Taft stations, but kept the northbound trains from Shaw to the end terminal at North Edsa operating.

MRT3 general manager Roberto Lastimoso said the damaged portion would have been repaired and restored to full operations by 9:30 last night.

Lastimoso said authorities would ask the private group in charge of maintaining the MRT3 what had gone wrong with the wiring, and the extent of their liability. The TESP, a subsidiary of Sumitomo Corp., is in charge of maintaining the MRT3, although Lastimoso reiterated that the government did not have up-to-date on its payments to the company.

More riders

"I would not completely blame them, however, because the maintenance requirement of the MRT had increased with the growing number of riders," said the MRT official.

He said the average of 400,000 persons ride the MRT 3 daily compared to the 350,000 daily ridership the government had anticipated.

"We have a problem with maintenance. But the system is good. Some facilities may have been designed to be replaced at a certain level of ridership, which we may have achieved already. We are also having problems increasing capacity for maintenance here," said Lastimoso.

The government pays the Sumitomo subsidiary about P60 million a month to make sure the MRT 3 is up to par.

This is the second time this year that the MRT had to suspend operations because of unplanned incidents.

In late February, a fire incident in Camp Crame forced the MRT service MRT 3 to partially suspend operations for several hours.

"We would not resume normal operations if we are not sure of our system. Public safety is always our priority," said Lastimoso.

With Margaux C. Ortiz

Worth the wait for Mariquit

Court affirms prosecution of tycoon's brother

By Tina Santos

IT WAS worth the wait.

After the Quezon City prosecutor's office affirmed its earlier decision to prosecute Ike Seet for libel in connection with John Gokongwei for alleged unfair harassment, Shangri-la Business says the case is worth the wait.

In a one-page resolution dated May 21, city prosecutors Alberto Agnedo and Reynaldo Pesumen upheld the decision by an earlier prosecutor filed by Gokongwei's brother, Lance Seet, and Eric Sevenson for lack of merit.

Go and Sevenson filed the suit, late after the prosecutor upheld on April 30, 2003 Seetsen's motion for reconsideration of the resolution that he conspired by another filed in September 2002 and ruled that there was a prima facie evidence to indict Ike respondents for acts of harassment.

Seetsen, 53, was a former marketing and communications chief of Digital Telecommunications, a Gokongwei-owned company when the alleged sexual harassment occurred.

Seetsen was Seetsen's immediate supervisor in Digital, whom she accused of consulting with Go to get her in a relationship position and eventually coax her out of the company.

Agnedo and Pesumen said they found merit in Seetsen's allegation that Ike had caressed her private parts despite her protest during a party in a company official's residence in November 1999.

"We have carefully reevaluated the evidence on record vis-a-vis the motion posed in the instant motion. (sic) found no sufficient reason to justify to reverse to alter or modify, much less to reverse, our assailed resolution," the resolution said.

The heavens called Go and his counsel Victory Bolivar several times in their efforts to comment but their secretaries Malou and Rachel Rodico said they were always busy attending meetings.

In an earlier interview, Go and Sevenson had denied Seetsen's accusations. "Unfounded, absurd and unspecified allegations" from "a 40-year-old grandmother," Go had told the Inquirer in August when the story first ran print.

"Somehow, I felt relieved. I've been waiting for this for the longest time," Seetsen said.

She had been expecting the prosecutors to issue the decision since November and had threatened it up several times, she said. The resolution was dated May 21 but was only released on June 26.

On Friday, Antillano told the Inquirer that the issue had already been resolved and that they would release the resolution the following week. The same day, Seetsen got a call from Antillano saying she could already get her copy of the resolution the following day, a Saturday.

Ex-matinee idol pleads not guilty

FORMER matinee idol William Martinez yesterday pleaded not guilty during his arraignment in connection with the drug-related charges filed against him before the Pasay City Regional Trial Court.

Martinez entered his plea before Judge Clemente Guerrero, of RTC Branch 116, where he is facing illegal drug use and illegal possession of drug paraphernalia.

The actor earlier posted a P92,000 bail for his temporary liberty. Summons on the date of the arraignment.

It can be recalled that Martinez was collared recently at the discotheque after he evaded a checkpoint set up by the police in the area about 10 pm on June 22.

He claimed that the house was owned by a friend who was not having been on hand.

Where he was subjected to a drug test, however, Martinez was found positive by Dahlia Antipolo. Martinez maintained his innocence.

Rondora

Elly Pamatong changes his tune

By Tarra V. Quismundo

HE ONCE needed the attention.

Days after he claimed responsibility for spawning spikes in stocks shocks that had damaged at least 140 vehicles, lawyer Elly Pamatong now languishing in a Legazpi provincial jail, appears to have changed his tune.

In television interviews, he retained full-color Pamela had said that his client, also a lawyer who had failed to run for governorship, had nothing to do with the spikes attack on June 20, but only did it to get attention.

"The prosecution's case would be weak if that is the case," said Division Police District Council Inspector Bernie chief Senior Inspector Inglatierra.

Pagdanganan filed one of the lone charges Pamatong is facing in Manila after he created up to five spikes attack. PPD District Director Chief Ernie Acosta also filed the same charges against Pamatong.

Two complainants, Rene Gerome of Paranaque and Rene Belen Mamangun of San Pedro, both filed charges of malicious mischief against Pamatong.

Court junks Forster bid

By Tina Santos

ACTRESS Jackie Forster's bid to reconsider a court ruling rescinding the annulment of her marriage to former husband, ex-NBA player Bonjo Paras, has been junked by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

Judge Rowena Zamora of RTC Branch 80 issued the two-page decision for reconsideration for lack of merit.

Last year, Zamora awarded the custody of Forster's two sons to Paras subject to her visitation as a reasonable time and basis.

In his Dec. 10, 2003 decision, the judge declared the marriage of Forster and Paras null and void and allowed the actress to use her maiden name.

Ombudsman shouldn't play favorites

ON TARGET

RAMON TULFO

THE OMBUDSMAN should not play favorites in investigating the lifestyle of government officials, a customs official under investigation says.

Customs Collector Alberto de Joya Iglesias, who has failed the lifestyle check, has urged the Ombudsman "not to be selective" in conducting the lifestyle check of officials of the Bureau of Customs. That includes Commissioner Antonio Bernardo.

Iglesias says Bernardo has brought a house in the Philippines and could afford to have his daughter study in the United States. In fact, she says, the customs chief frequents the United States. "At whose expense?" she asks.

Iglesias' complaint of favoritism by the Office of the Ombudsman has been unfounded so far. Up to now no one (either) member or former member has been suspended or has had to undergo the rigors of the lifestyle check.

The highest official in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration who has so far failed the lifestyle check is an undersecretary who holds more power, and could afford to have more money, the chief of his subordinates?

What is cause for the goose is cause for the gander, as the saying goes.

* * *

The Supreme Court has decided that examinees who fail the bar exams on their 10th try will no longer be allowed to take it again. The high court gives the exams for

would be lawyers.

Sadly enough, A (grade) is expected to have at least a modicum of intelligence. Ordinary people look up to men and women who take "attorney" for their title because of their high educational attainment.

But the high tribunal should have decreed that all lawyers be proficient in English.

If you have been to a courtroom trial, you'll be amazed at how many lawyers ever passed the bar exams with their poor command of the English language. Let's face it: English is still the lingua franca in the legal profession.

Many lawyers speak English as if it were not our second language. Some kids who grew up on Sesame Street on television speak much better English.

Examinees who are inattentive in speech and in writing English should be given a failing mark. They should be told to go back to grammar school.

Would you believe some trial lawyers would say "What did you did have done?" when cross-examining court witnesses?

That's how low the quality of most of our law schools has sunk.

* * *

If we want our students to be competitive in the world job market, we should begin "unlearning" bad habits and make English a medium of instruction in our schools.

Many schools, especially the University of the Philippines, use Filipino as their medium of instruction. Supposedly, English is only another subject. Should be well-versed in English.

* * *

In the age of globalization, no nation is an exclusive White China, for example, has to hundreds of thousands of its nursing and medical graduates in the United States and Europe.

To be competitive in the world job market, nurses should be well-versed in English.

* * *

When did the disconnect in English among Filipinos come about?

In the late 1960s, the nationalist heroes among the youth came about. The youth activists spoke in fluent poster Filipino during demonstrations and rallies. The mayors of Manila or the provinces, Antonio Villegas, also propagated quote Filipino as the "ito" language.

Because of the hatred for the United States, our former subservience Filipino was embarrassed as the language of government. As a result, Filipinos started to become inarticulate in English.

English was not only language as our second language, it was discarded in favor of Filipino as the sole language.

Tight security set for GMA inaugural

Although Roxas Boulevard that cuts through the congested grounds will not be closed to traffic, security measures would be tight, Chief Supt. Edgardo Acop, PNP chief of operations, said.

High-rise buildings

High-rise buildings in the vicinity of Rizal Park are also being closely monitored to eliminate the possibility that there could be used by snipers or escorts, said Chief Supt. Avelino Agustin, Western Police District spokesperson.

The Manila Police District Police Office had already placed the five police districts in the metropolis under full alert status.

METPO spokesperson Bart Bartolomio said 1,000 policemen assigned to secure the Quezon Circle area would already be deployed this afternoon.

Even if Roxas Boulevard would be open to traffic, the nearby Estrella and Independencia roads would be closed to vehicles beginning 6:30 a.m.

Traffic would also be prevented from going near the pasture, he mentioned. The inspector said: "If the motorists want to listen to the President's inaugural speech at the grandstand, they should leave their automobiles behind for security reasons," Agustin said.

No permits, no rallies

As for rallies, whether for or against Mr. Macapagal, rigorous and permission would be asked to have if they have no permits. Certain areas, especially the area fronting the United States embassy, are definitely off limits, he added.

Checkpoints would also be set up on the roads leading to the Quezon Memorial.

Security forces are also alert for a group suspected of links to the opposition protest their operation devices in Manila for such as an apparent move to undermine Mr. Macapagal, who the opposition says claimed her way to victory in the May 10 elections.

Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the military's vice chief of staff, said security forces were still monitoring several retired generals and a few officers for possible links with a group planning to disrupt the President's inauguration. "The threat remains," he said.

Foreign ambassadors and envoys, including one each from the Vatican by Pope John Paul II, are expected to attend the inauguration.

Mr. Macapagal had said the noon a "simple" and "austere" ceremony to reflect the seriousness of his pledges to improve the lot of poor Filipinos.

For supporters

As preparations continue for the inauguration tomorrow, Presidential said they would hold simultaneous rallies in Metro Manila today.

National Coordinating Council by volunteers media committee member Jeggey Sheen said "some opposition leaders" would also join the street protests today.

With Dennis Chuaco, Reuters

MEMBERS of a Makati UNLP team assist passengers get off a train at MRT, which stopped due to tracks near Edsa-Ayala Street on Edsa when short circuit hit the light rail cable system Monday.

METRO

Tight security measures set for GMA inaugural

By Leila B. Salaverria and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

NOT TAKING chances in security lapses, military and police officials are making sure that measures are in place for the inaugural ceremonies of President Macapagal-Arroyo tomorrow at the Rizal Park in Manila.

Mr Macapagal-Arroyo's new six-year term with a speech at the historic park followed by an oath-taking ceremony in Cebu City after Congress last week approved its election count showing she beat film star Fernando Poe Jr. by more than a million votes.

Eight Sambr unnamed persons and cavalries were brought in from an army base north of the capital to reinforce security forces in Manila, said military spokesman Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero.

At least 200 anti-riot cops from the regional police camp in Camp Olivas, Pampanga, were also sent to Metro Manila yesterday to help secure the inauguration, according to Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, Central Luzon police chief.

REPORT A-10

children's hour

Believe that one hour can make a difference.

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Malasadnes

Clash of sprinters topbills Asian Prix

WHO'S Asia's fastest woman?

Sri Lanka's Susanthika Jayasinghe and Uzbekistan's Guzlem Pavgelieva will try to answer the poser again when the 3rd Honda Asian Grand Prix is held on July 1 at the Hard Rock track and Racetrack.

Pavgelieva set the Asian championships mark of 11.41 seconds in the century dash but rose to fifteenth, but Jayasinghe wasn't around then. Pavgelieva also raked the 200m in 23.11 seconds to complete regalian double.

In 2002, Busan, South Korea Games confirmation, Jayasinghe handily won in a record 11.13 seconds, with Pavgelieva second in 11.40. Jayasinghe, however, injured a leg muscle and was unable to compete in the 200m.

Susanthika and non-rated long Chen Jianxia of China led the field batch of athletes who declared yesterday for the elite competition organized by the Asian Athletics Association.

In the same team tomorrow, Haijun sport teams Gonzalo Chenwood of Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia's Fatma Al'Omen to rolling the meet 1:56m with a time of 10.25 seconds. The Kazakh turned in 10.27 seconds while the Saudi her comes in 13.28.

Apart from the Korean Games group and the four-time 110mh contingent, teams from Saudi Arabia (24), Oman (6), Iran (2), Kuwait (2), Australia (2), Hong Kong (6) and Korea have also joined in. They were followed by delegations from Singapore, India (42), Thailand (14) and Japan (9).

Meanwhile, the Sydney Olympics video modeller, and teammate Dennisworth Bawlen, the Asian 400-m champion, together with athletes from Kazakhstan (12), Kyrgyzstan (2) and Indonesia (5) will shoot in today.

AAMAO president Go Teng Kok said he is happy then as host, he will have the privilege to field other Filipino sprinters originally entered in the 10-country for both men and women.

Entering those who will see action are Rene Candelario and Jesse Ding (400m), John Lavadia and Jhoe Moreno (3000). Mary Grace Bulgos (women's 400m) and Jen Gallardo quartered Cristalyn Ang, Julia Warren and Rosmar Morill.

"At least, we 400m will be given a chance to measure themselves against Asia's best," said Go, who thanked SBS for sponsoring the Manila leg.

SPRINGboard: Uzbekistan's Guzlem Pavgelieva (right) stretches out to win the 100m ahead of Sri Lanka's Susanthika Jayasinghe in the 3rd Honda Asian Grand Prix at the Rizal Memorial Track and Racetrack in Manila. Pavgelieva also won the 200m in 23.11 seconds to complete a golden double. | AP

FG makes initial ₱5-M pledge for SEAG bid

TEAM in his pledge to consummate on sports and charity, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo had slapped in an initial P5 million to boost the country's quest for the overall championship of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games here.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said he received the commitment from Mr. Arroyo last Saturday during the latter's birthday bash at Malacañang Park.

"The First Gentleman is very passionate about sports because he believes that it is a unifying factor for grassroots nationalism," Buhain said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier ordered the PSC chief to make sure the country finally wins the overall title, which the Philippines missed by a single gold medal in the 1991 edition of the Games here.

"We're happy that the First Couple is directly involved in sports," said Buhain, whose agency will coordinate on the training of about fifty national athletes.

According to Buhain, RP lawmakers who from 109 to 120 of the gold medals at stake in the Nov. 23-30 Games to form a dynasty of capturing the overall crown.

"The trend is true since the 1980s. The overall champion won at least 27 percent of the total golds disputed," said Buhain, who hoped for forecast on the number of overall colour 400 projected by the Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee.

Marc Anthony Reyes

NON-FLAMMABLE!!!
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US town feels strain of Bryant's rape trial

EAGLE, Colorado — On her way to work each day at administrative of a health clinic, Krista Turner drives past the courthouse in this former coal mountain town where she was raped five night years.

Across the street from the gray brick court building, she spots the lot that fills with media trucks whenever TV news comes back to the locating what have made this town a household name around the country.

Along the sidewalk, the area wooden planters where concrete rises next to frame those of reporters and legal analysts discussing the latest developments in the rape case against basketball star Kobe Bryant.

"It's put Eagle on the map, but I don't know if it's the kind of attention this town wants to have," said Turner, who was in her eighth and final year as mayor when the case broke a year ago this month.

Much has happened since June 30, 2003 — the night Bryant is accused of forcing himself on a then 19-year-old hotel employee.

The woman has been named in the tabloid press, her lawyer and video shown. Her mother said she has moved through four states trying to outrun tabloid reporters and private investigators hired by Bryant's attorneys.

She is no demanded she couldn't sing at a relative's wedding or see her younger friends graduate from her high school in the spring.

At 25, Bryant remains one of the NBA's most lucrative stars. He turned in stunning performances on the hardwood court, even on nights when he had been directly involved in a harrowing ordeal.

BRYANT

In the past year, he has lost endorsements worth millions from McDonald's and from the Italian company that makes Nutella chocolate spread. Coca-Cola dropped a spring fling by saying Bryant is really Adi Dwight Dr company said that area planned before Bryant's arrest.

If Bryant is acquitted, he probably will continue to play professional basketball, but will likely forfeit most if not all new endorsements, said David Carter, head of The Sports Business Group marketing firm. AP

Only 14 RP bets in Athens

IT'S FINAL, only 14 Filipino athletes will shoot for the chance Olympic medallist athens Games.

This is after no RP swimmers failed to or have equal the minimum requirement for Olympic participation during the Philippines Team Invitational held in Kuala Lumpur over this weekend.

The tankers, however, made a big splash in the competition, amassing seven gold, six silver and three bronze medals and setting seven Philippine record and five Malaysian meet standards.

National team director Teresita Lazada said she was actually impressed with the performance of the team. He said patients featured the return of the swimmers in Malaysia, spending about $2 million each swimmer.

Heat by Gonzalez-o won her second gold in the 800-m freestyle with a time of 9 minutes and 10.90 seconds—smashing the RP record by more than four seconds. She bagged her third gold in the 200 butterfly in a meet record time of 4:27.28.

Lizi Jimala shared the spotlight with a meet record 2:02.12 in capturing the 200-m backstroke gold. She also secured the second in the 100-m backstroke (1:10.62).

Rachel Cheng topped the 100-m breaststroke with a time of 1:10.64 for the second gold medal in the meet, while Monty Kolter copped the gold in the 400-m freestyle with a competition record time of 4:48.32.

La Salle, UST tossers try to forge title showdown

JAMES EMORY GAMBOA

LA SALLE — ———— ——— ——— ——

Bernardino-Tajon tandem sweeps dancesport golds

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna – Mikaela Jean Bernardino and Cymbeline Tajon of Ramon Magsaysay High School represented Zamboanga City in the dancesport competition of the 3rd Manila Youth Games yesterday at the Hidee Aquino Stadium.

Bernardino and Tajon, veterans of 13 dancesport meets, including the Singapore Millennium Games, breezed through Rumba + Samba and topped the standard and Latin disciplines of the youth division for the tournament's first gold medals.

"We really prepared hard for this event because we want to win the gold medal again," said the 13-year-old Bernardino, whose partnership with Tajon also resulted in a sweep of the dancesport events last year.

Kabataang ng Muyalda District 1 duo Percival Bacolod and Ashley Rose Bojang and District 13 duo Jessica and Rica Jane Pena placed second and third, respectively, in the standard competition.

District 11 Leonardo Nazario and Shelyn Pedrito and District 16 Jayson Maulen and Sheena Quirino, on the other hand, took top two spots in the Latin division.

Baron Glenn Bonemerge Adonis's Kevin Jomen Morinda and Camila Angne matched the feat of Bernardino and Tajon with their win in sample in the Juvenile category of the event sponsored by PNC, Pepsi, Smart Communications, the 21 NCAA Superstars, Hotels Philippines, Accel, Instroparts, Cebi Lape, Powerade, Mister Sports, Harrison Plaza and Universal Philippines.

Marinduque, 12, and Angue, 12, also kept the crowded and Latin crowns they won in 2003.

Team achievements: Ashley Bryle Jones, age and Rachelyn Ortillos, placed second in Youth discipline while Jose Andrew Gonzalez's Manuel Bonito and Wilfred Bienvenido Jose stood third in the duo standard event. Stars in Tv Cecilia Bernardo's and Mary Grace Caluzada wound up third in Latin.

At the NAIA Memorial Ballpark, Villegas Magbalot struck demolished TOMS, 17-1, at the start of LBB League One Division.

Jun Llave pitched a no-hitter in a rope, lated three-inning game, as his Toolsbased team dominated from the game with seven runs in the first inning.

Villegas' team in softball also went off to a rousing start, ripping Magsaysay High, 15-4.

Action in lawn tennis, table tennis, chess and volleyball blares off today.

Red Cubs overpower Staglets

By Jasmine W. Pipo

HEFTY Jay-R Taguiam scored 21 points and dominated the shaded lane to power the San Beda Red Cubs to a 44-point blowout of San Sebastian Staglets, 110-74, yesterday at the start of the 80th NCAA junior basketball tournament at the Rizal Coliseum.

The defending champion Red Cubs ruined the second half with an 18-0 blast, including back-to-back three-point shots by Mayvel Mortuan, as the Staglets struggled defensively and offensively shooting only four field goals in the third period.

Earlier, Mike Arnaldo keyed his top scorer with 20 points for Jose Rizal University in the Light Bombers' subdued the University of Perpetual Help, 69-60.

Miguel Tolibas stood at the vanguard of the La Salle offensive as the Greenies overwhelmed host site with 17 points, Mapua Red Robbers, 88-53.

The Greenies posted their second straight win to push their record to 2-1 while Mike Bercilla and Jason Tagaida fired 20 points each for the jumpy Cardinals, 2-1 in Group A.

In the other game, Jacob Tagaida fired 20 points to lift the jumpy Cardinals, 2-1 in Group A.

The Light Bombers led most of the way, outscoring Perpetual Help, 22-19, in the second quarter to build a 46-40 cushion at the half.

The scores:

Final Game

JRU (6)—Lotilla 19, Arabis 11, Librando 9, Lunar 10, Dio 0-4, Arabis 3, Tiquia 2, Ilagan 0, Librando 0, Jhs Bench

UPHSD (4)—Fernandez 17, Amar 11, Adrian 10, Jan Paul Lim 8, Lumbres 6, Jhs Bench

Quarters: 15-13, 24-32, 63-47, 69-60

Second Game

SBC (74)—Mortuan 22, Taguiam 21, Abuan 12, Garcia 9, Antonio 11, Ocampo 6, Cruz 0, Jang 2, Tolibas 5, Gutierrez 3, Castillo 1, Bautista 2,

SSAS (60)—Gamboa 20, Antonio 14, Gilbert 12, Bacal 10, Lopez 2, Jose 2, Jhs Bench

Quarters: 27-Mar, 52-40, 87-58, 110-74

MOST IMPRESSIVE: Singapore Millennium bronze medalists Bernardino (right) and Tajon another way to the PNY Games gold in the Latin discipline of dancesport at the Hidee Aquino Stadium. (EJ VIDA)

SPORTSWATCH

Bautista, Maico prevail; Tribo beaten

UNDEFEATED boy 'Bonecrusher' Bautista continued his march to history yesterday by dispatching Japanese Nobuaki Tanzaki in three rounds of their scheduled 10-rounder last Boxing Center in Manila City. James Pedro "Caliche" Mahinay of Bacolod City also remained undefeated with a unanimous decision win over Japanese Akira Hiroshima another 10-rounder that MP superbantam champ Dagupan Sibon (3-1, 1 KO) won on points by an unanimous report. Ryan Caliche outpointed Hiroshima (5-5-3, 1 KO) over unanimous decision over 10 rounds. Caliche (5-0, 1 KO) of the country's no. 1 bantamweight host. Caliche's 46-8 duties, completely dominated Hiroshima throughout the bout and landed more punches per fight to limit the opponent that prompted opponent's no intention to continue beyond after the bout. Tribo underscored the speed and lateral skills of Mahinay's who outpounded his opponent 10-10, 10-10, 10-10. **Antonio J. Lagumbay Contributor**

Al-Khady captures 2 titles in Milo netfest

ZAMBOANGA—Al-Khady Jamal whipped Jon Bernabal 6-4, 6-4, in the under 10 male final round under Milo, 6-2, 6-1, in the boys' 12 under division competition schedule today in the 2004 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Pangasinan Governor's Cup Zamboanga City Lawn Tennis Association tournament here. Al-Khady shared the boys' title with Ibrahim Tinsman, who stopped Jerel Pangilinan, 6-3, 2-6, 6-3, for the boys' 10 under title. Brad Bandoja overwhelmed Jasper Barrera, 6-4, 6-4, for the boys' 12 under crown. Chrysalis Ellen Valera who defeated Marissa Gonzales, 6-0, 6-0, to collect the girls' 12 under crown. Ellen Valera also defeated Marissa Gonzales, 6-0, 6-0, to collect the girls' 10 under crown. Ellen Mercado defeated Shaina Tolibas, 6-0, 6-0, for the girls' 10 under championship. Ellen Valera

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TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Lira Raul D. Mercado
Assistant Editor Carrie S. Nartatez

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San Miguel eyes expansion in Malaysia

By Blaine L. Sanchez

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) is seeking its rights on Malaysia as part of its aggressive overseas (read: expansion) binge.

SMC president Ramon Ang said the company was specifically looking at selling here and hard liquor in Johor, a Malaysian state near the Singapore border.

Ang said that he expected to break ground in the Malaysia-Singapore market "within the next two to three months."

Ang also disclosed plans to buy a 20-hectare property for a commercial-industrial-residential mixed-use project in Malaysia, but did not say whether the project would be owned by shareholder or non-exclusively by them.

He said he was optimistic SMC could secure a permit for its planned expansion in Malaysia.

Insurance sources said that SMC was in the process of developing non-beer products in Indonesia and was also expanding its presence in packaging

Repair while you wet

IT JUST came to our attention that the people in Malacañang were among those few people in the universe human race, both living and dead, who had no inkling whatsoever about our enormous problem in electricity.

Ignacio Bunye, Gloriastela spokesperson, just denied that Malacañang had knowledge of what the Luis Bay Magsaysay was doing, asking for a new increment of almost double.

Now that name Magsaysay in National Power Corp., a semi-monopoly now, but a full monopoly not too long ago, which is owned by—and you couldn't have guessed this—none other than the government itself.

This must mean, not to mention Ebenezer's many years of mismanagement and corruption in the company Magsaysay is serving, badly shelves, at a P1.65 billion/year.

Let me see if I get this right: Magsaysay, which is the biggest baddest of the many generating units and ties to the government AT THAT, is blowing steam from a hemisphere, and still Malacañang does not know what the hell is blowing, is that it?

* * *

REALLY, we have not seen an official in one of land-washing since the time of Ferdinec Pilane. But don't get me wrong. I admire Ferdy Banzon. He is a lot cleaner than Gloriastela's political dynasty of electrocuting-and-overcharging-consumer families...combined.

It's just that the position of this new administration on the electricity issue is so untenable. Ex Ermig made a big deal—and, now it's makes him sound stupid.

This new administration, you see, is considered the problems of the already messed-up Magsaysay. For many "rule" points, with her popularity rating down somewhere there in purgatory, Gloriastela found a cut-in-power issue the past two years.

In the language of technocrats, the cut simply meant a "subsidy," and to Magsaysay, it translated to find-able. Listen, according to some 91.66 billion this year, to 2017.

Except for the people in Malacañang, everybody in the world knows that we cannot go on like this. Due to the subsidy abuse, Magsaysay will collapse sooner or later. Worst of all, the country cannot even hope for progress of any such a debacle.

* * *

HERE and abroad, for sure, Republic-owner hundreds upon hundreds of billions of pesos. Even some investment are already so edgy as a Taipei kid who just downed two cups of pure juice. For its own, today, Magsaysay cannot even borrow a cross-eyed centavo.

Thus, the national government must bear for the Magsaysay. Not to find, it must absorb those hundreds upon hundreds of billions of pesos of Magsaysay debts, some P850 billion in of last count, and still counting. Thanks to the (Joe's arm) subsidy.

And Malacañang does not see any problem so far? Huey, good rid. But, can administration can always add as with more cause to turn off Magsaysay's debts. But what about the future of the country, if we again suffer from a lack-cost of power shortage?

* * *

He aside from the financial savvy-hoodwinker of Magsaysay, we are also wondering why Mr. Pilar came from now, and even name one, SECRET SCRIP. And the damage cannot be repaired while you wait. It takes time!

* * *

Only this summer, the Luzon grid had a sudden power cut of 1,400 megawatt of the power it required. For the information of people in Malacañang, the world's minimum standard for power source should be 20 percent. We have a problem, dude!

* * *

IF AGAIN that's, in the logic of our brave Cabinet members, "no reason to alarm," I think that people in Malacañang ought to have to refine business in the dark, by bracing up for the crisis, having their own power generator sets, which by the way only cost a lot.

Whether or not this cave administration cares to admit it, Magsaysay must raise rates, in order to do away with the Gloriastela "subsidy," now that she has...well, "term."

All right, we all want low electricity rates. If it is possible, we even want cheaper rates. But the low-rate does no good to us, the people whom Ka Ermig calls as "small consumers," if the cut comes about from government subsidy.

Why? Individually those who benefit the most from the subsidy are not the small consumers, but the low-income ranging from $2.50 to $6.70 per month, which are meant to cover only the increase in fuel prices.

The CAB said that once the prices of fuel have dropped, airlines would also have to reduce or totally remove the fuel surcharge from the cost of their tickets.

"We are sharing the cost with our passengers. If we reduce the cost of the consumption of Cebu Air said PAL can pay all the same," said Peggy Peter-Siew, vice president of Cebu Air.

Four carriers from eight countries like Royal Brunei, Saudi Arabian and Qatar Airways sought adjustments to their fare to ease the increase in fuel price. Royal Brunei and Saudi Arabian Airlines, $7 per sector; Qatar Airways, $10 per sector; British Airways, $4 per sector; Cathay Pacific, $8 to $14 per sector depending on the route; Emirates Air, $6 per sector; Malaysian Airlines, $6 per sector; and Vietnam Airlines, $5 per sector.

CAB said the petitions would be heard and deliberated on separately.

PAL, CebuPac fare hike OKd

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE CIVIL Aeronautics Board has approved the petitions of Philippine Airlines and Cebu Pacific for an increase in their round-trip fare by 10 percent or one-way trip, or $12 for a round-trip flight.

The increase, which will take effect immediately, will cover the additional cost of fuel consumed by the airlines in the wake of the continuing increase in oil prices.

Fuel accounts for 38 percent of an airline's operating cost per passenger. PAL said the surge in jet fuel prices had caused its operating cost per passenger by $20.44 while Cebu Pacific said it had risen by $20.

PAL and Cebu Air said they have yet to decide whether to ask for a similar increase for their domestic routes.

The CAB stressed that the fuel surcharge or the additional fare would stay in effect while the price of aviation fuel (at high $0.20/$20 per barrel in May 2003, the price of jet fuel had gone up to $47.71 per barrel).

PAL told Cebu Pacific's joint petition was the first approved by the CAB. Previous foreign airlines were asked for a fuel hike of as much as $20 for a one-way trip.

American carrier Northwest Airlines sought the highest fare increase of $20 per one-way trip. All others sought a fuel surcharge ranging from $2.50 to $6.70 per sector, which was meant to cover only the increase in fuel prices.

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Subic Freeport opens ₱200-M fertilizer depot

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority yesterday inaugurated a P200-million fertilizer terminal facility, which is seen to boost the government's plan to improve returns to food security and agriculture.

SBMA Chair Rolando C. Paredes said in a statement that the fertilizer depot was also a big push for the agency's bid to become a major Asian import hub in the country.

Paredes said the terminal was a major component of the master plan for Subic port modernization project to be able to offer complete port handling facilities on any kind of cargo such as containerized, bulk and conventional.

He added that the Subic Freeport Terminal Inc. (SFTI) has constructed the fertilizer terminal complex handling facility for fertilizer and non-fertilizer products at the Redstar Wharf.

Government initiatives that would benefit from the facility include production and trade of any, non-sacrificial value crops like tobacco, sugar, rice and other agricultural commodities under the Comprehensive Agreement Program.

The launch of the fertilizer depot came in the wake of the inauguration of a 9.5-metric ton grain silo, one of 12 that from part of the comprehensive bulk grain handling facilities in the freeport.

The grain silo complex is being built into an extensive bulk grain terminal of the Subic Bay Freeport Grain Terminal Services Inc.

When the grain silo is fully operating, the country is expected to be assured of "breakthrough" supply of agricultural products such as soybeans, wheat and corn.

Malacañang is looking to the streamlining of the country's logistics and transport systems, particularly those related to agricultural products to make them more affordable to consumers.

Last April, SBMA officials broke ground at the Leroy Wharf in Cubi Point to start the ₱239-million Subic port development project that was seen to spur economic progress in Central Luzon.

The port project includes land reclamation and construction of a new port container terminal at the Cubi Point area covering of two hectares that would easily handle up to one million twenty-foot container and accommodate Panamax-sized and bigger vessels.

Market continues consolidation

STOCKS closed for yesterday as investors took profits on robust blue chips led by telecom leader PLDT and second-ranked Globe Telecom Inc.

Analysts said cautious ahead of the June 30 inauguration of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the US Federal Reserve's two-day rate-setting policy meeting which begins on Tuesday kept most players sidelined.

The Fed is expected to raise the benchmark rate by 25 basis points to counter the issue of low interest, a move which might persuade the Philippine central bank to follow its own monetary policy rates higher. The country's overnight borrowing rate is at 6.75 percent and lending rate at 9.0 percent. They have not been changed since July 2003.

"The market continued with its consolidation in opposition to 64 percent trillion valuation the presidential and vice presidential inauguration on June 30 have not been fully discounted," said SEC Investment research head Chelsea Dyanngard.

The main index finished in positive territory, up 0.06 point or 0.86 percent at 1,080.35 points.

Value turnover fell to P266.11 million from Friday's P486.9 million. Losers outnumbered gainers 26 to 17 and there were 40 stocks unchanged.

Eagle Equities president Jose Rosas said most players would likely wait until after the presidential and vice presidential inauguration before buying stocks again.

"Window-dressing by foreigners slowed down after last week.

They are likely awaiting the Fed move. But after all these, they will likely start positioning, especially on those which lagged well in the second quarter," Rosas said.

The market is likely to trade within the 1,060 and 1,080 range this week, he said.

Reuters

Omission

THE FOLLOWING paragraphs were inadvertently omitted from Victor C. Aquedo's column, Corridors, which came out yesterday:

"Ironically, the husband also wrote Godinho to clarify certain points in the previous statement.

For example, in the 24 years that they have been married, "we only lived together for 7.7 years," Rolly Mercado said. "Since 1995, I never saw Gloria, as said she called in August 1997 when she needed (money) for her senior faculty because they were about to be removed from their house which they sold."

He said he offered the wife the P5-million cash component for the annulment of their marriage before the August 2003 landfall "because we have a court-approved dissolution of conjugal properties, which was executed in 1998."

"In this agreement, it states that pieces of jewelry amounting to approximately $400,000 (about P22 million) lent to him during our marriage but for personal use must be returned upon demand," Rolly Mercado said. "I have tried to him these on several occasions however, she has failed to return each."

"While my mother was living with me, I never saw Gloria visit her. Even when visits were planned to me for their parents' birthdays, she would not come."

We need to show ourselves that in this country, they are welcomed to the power business. If it is not for which to expect from this new administration, they can also make excuses. Time we must take politics out of power rates. The decisions are very urgent.

* * *

All P is, we are hearing such-like signals from the, or, "plow" of this new administration to make our lives better. It was to make all of us richer than we are. Is that it, Pilar?

And on Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri: talks about new policies and strategies. Other people are now talking about the new improved agenda of this new administration. In short, it's business-as-usual.

Seven here or no hexagon, we just wonder, well, whatever happened to all the similar wonderful "plans" and "agenda" in the past three years. Well basically, nothing!

Before our chief economic planner relates strategy, perhaps we have to take stock of what we did in the past five years, first, because to the guys down here, it seems that we started all doing, we started several things. The power sector is one. Gloriastela remember.

The Supreme Court managed business confidence by scrapping IOT contracts for a bobby. Before that, we are getting. Contracts can be cancelled anytime, right?

I mean, sure, boss, you make no cases we with tears with even items for our national positions, and all those billions! Ah, but what about the jobs? Well, that's many economic jobs lives. Isn't, starting infrastructure?

Disclosures

ELECTED directors of **Metrobank Corp.** were Rogelio Encarnacion, Lorenzo Kuenzonbi Jr., Dennis Funtebarbo, Benjamin Kuenzonbi Jr., Ma. Socorro Kuenzonbi Bautista, Jesus Ponce-Cuenco, Alfredo Kuenzonbi, Jose Kuenzonbi Jr., Antonio Viterbo, Oscarpascual Pineda and Manuel Lim.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Ayala Foods Inc.** were Jose Commendador Jr., Jose Ma. Concepcion III, Francisco Gagnon, Fulgencio Factoran Jr., Lito Gatmaitan, Emmanuel Estrella, Joseph Earnest Jr., Jaime Ysmael, Susan Bacaltcombe and Antonino Patron-Jacquier.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **iPeople Inc.** were Ernesto Garan, Marco Stefan, Fernan Vachongco, Percy Yu, John Addleton, Milagros Reyes, Gene Bermudez-Lao, Theodore Valenzuela and Orlando Vea. The company also declared cash dividends of P0.35 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of July 9, payable on Aug. 5.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Banco de Oro Universal Bank** were Teresita Sy-Coson, Jesus A. Jacinto Jr., Nestor Vea, Vicente Cuna, Antonio Moncada, Jimmy Tang, Leonid Rimbo, Jonathan Ong, Armando Medina, Jesus Ferrer and Anthony Feria.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.** were Jose Ma. Alcantara, Jesus

Will GMA do better second time around?

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo swore in on the 24th of June 2004 which is 6/24/2004. A numerologist pointed out that three 4 individual numbers all add up to 9, so the sequence is 666, a diabolical number. I would like to add that the turnover of the DOE, reported one day ago from Jesse Robredo, to Vince Perez is an amazing coincidence. Anyway, she will be inaugurated on 6/30/2004, which adds up to 15, which is two 666's up another 9. If books at all else might have a desirable 666-inch period ahead, perhaps for some of the opposition.

This week she will have a marathon and now she wants a honeymoon. I did not realize that she was so romantic. The SNB arrived on June 21 and should complete their evaluation of the Philippine economy by July 8, by which time she will have visited her Calabarzon. Then they can study the report to detect GMA is an iconoclast herself to see she might discover some new ideas to add to the mix.

To date, her performance has been abysmal. The deficit has risen to a level incomprehensible when she took over, and is still continuing to rise at least until 2008. The number of people unemployed or practically employed is also at record high, the highest in the history. Forty percent of the population, about 33 million, live below the poverty level, another record high. Inflation has risen to 4.4 percent, but this is partly due to oil prices.

However, to be fair, she has been fighting with one hand tied behind her back. She was not elected in the normal way and the opposition was powerful enough to thwart all her attempts to pass really important bills to raise revenue.

So, for over three years, the country has been floundering like a ship without a rudder. The interest on our debt eating up 37 percent of the national income but if you include repayment of principal, it rises to 61 percent.

She is now in a far better position to put the country back on an even keel. She has been duly elected for a six-year term and now controls both Congress and the Senate, though she is not even close to a two-thirds majority. If the opposition will stop backbiting, she should at last be able to take the necessary measures to get the country back on its feet.

She should impose heavy taxes on spirits, luxury cars and cigarettes. In the case of the latter, I would suggest 100 percent or so on the retail price. I just bet we can double or triple our, and it would be a boon to our health.

The latest medical report from America shows that smoking can shorten your life by as much as 10 years. By making it prohibitively expensive, she will be doing millions of people a favor.

She should also improve our armed forces. Ten of one percent of everybody needs P150 million or more. This would mean adding up all their assets, property, stocks and assets abroad. In the process, she would scare billionaire clients against dividend earners and would help create a number of large new enemies. We know this is England, but the rate is much higher.

We also have estate duty, which goes as high as 80 percent on the death of a wealthy man and his spouse. And she wants to also double the capital gains tax which, as property bought many years ago can be a large item. She wonders we can afford less modernization and five-star wives.

Suppose a major threat in the government's side, but had a severe tension, her income taking for a whopping 70 percent, to the special ones rare years. This will make a great title on the government will help be able to sell off 45 assets, thought to be worth $6.7 billion. It will also relieve us of paying P68 billion in interest every year.

Unfortunately, this will mean a big increase in electricity bills and likewise, which is really the dirty trick, will have to pass on the extra charges just like the oil companies do.

Of course, they will get the blame and it might even jeopardize their record vote take, granted and even known. Maybe have to pay P30 billion to consumers under a court order and is trying to save $200 million from a fund issue.

If Magsaysa is still the cheapest producer, this also might be ordered to buy them power from them, which would adversely affect First Philippine Holdings. This would be a crushing blow for Roxanne, which is still reeling from the Supreme Court's decision to give the government most of the $120-million performance bond, due to Hopewell Water Services prematurely terminating its 25-year contract. The debt of Roxanne exceed P30 billion and this figure is zero to one billion.

Lawyer FRIENDS has asked me to write the following here in my column. "Dear Mr. Bearbull, please inform both your readers that any scattering of ashes on state roads in Manila was not a political act. I work for a law company on commission, and I am having a lousy year. I have only three, which is better than Mexico could ever hope to do. Anyway, it is good for the economy as it is environmentally friendly. It has been a well-fitting experience, but I have now decided to retire. I wish everyone a good year." author holds personal and

Mr. Bearbull

Ben Arabelo

Tax incentives cost gov't ₱462B in potential revenue

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE GOVERNMENT lost P462 billion in potential revenues, or more than double its current budget deficit, due to the granting of various fiscal incentives from 1999 to 2003.

This is the reason Department of Finance's most confusing "great investors" incentive. The DOF, which was given the daunting task of solving the deficit problem, said it was about time the government reviewed and harmonized its numerous programs.

According to documents from the Fiscal Incentives Review Board (FIRB), the P462 billion worth of fiscal perks came in the form of tax and duty exemptions of various imports, investment plans or firms registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and other tax exemptions.

"There is an ongoing relocation of the incentives. The objective is to make the government incentives program more focused—meaning investors that should be attracted will only have to be given that are necessary, minimal or given out locally," said Assistant Undersecretary Grace Tan.

Data from the FIRB showed that the government lost the biggest potential revenue in 1999, when the value of fiscal incentives totaled P178.77 billion. The government lost P60.04 billion in 1999, P97.89 billion in 2000, P98.89 billion in 2002 and P100.17 billion in 2003. figures for the years 2001 to 2003 were still preliminary.

The P100.19 billion worth of foregone revenues last year was equivalent to 2.3 percent of the country's gross domestic product for that year.

The biggest revenue losses, worth P102.79 billion, came from the tax and duty exemptions granted to several firms, many of which were exporters. The government provides incentives to exporters to boost their sales and thus help the country have a better balance of trade picture.

San Miguel . . .

Continued from B1

half of next year. This would bring it more or less up to its earning levels in the food and beverage industry 2007.

As part of this vision, SMC identified seven countries for its regional expansion—Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan and Australia—initially committing $500 million for each expansion.

SMC has completed its purchase of the assets of Tan Yaneo Brewery and, for approximately $90 million this month. These included a modern brewery on a 21.75-hectare site in Pathum Thani, north of Bangkok, which is capable of producing 1 million hectoliters of beer a year.

The purchase will also allow SMC to tap into the fast growing Thai beer market, currently dominated by Singapore.

SMC also said the acquisition will create synergies with other SMC projects in Thailand, particularly with San Miguel (Thailand) Co. Ltd., the company's food and beverage venture in Thailand's Amata City (Bupong) Industrial Estate. SMC plans to market San and distribute beverage products, processed food as well as food and packaging there.

Last November, SMC also purchased TTC (Vietnam) Co., Ltd., a leading large and food and beverage company in Vietnam. It also recently acquired a business license for an ice production business in Brunei, Guangdong Province in mainland China.

The company's total investment there will amount to $45 million while the investee will allow its compa- ny to operate in Brunei for 50 years, or until March 2054.

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BUSINESS

Healthy supplies drag down oil prices

With high inventories, market should not be above $33, say analysts

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SINGAPORE—Oil prices on Monday fell again as crude output at strike-bound Norwegian oilfields returned to normal and Iraq's Gulf exports recommenced.

US light crude slid 40 cents to $37.15 a barrel, extending Friday's $1 cent loss when Dili eased emergency fears to other refinery bottlenecks after Norway's total three million barrels of daily output was characterized with disaster.

"The strike in Norway was the biggest supportive factor," said Tony Nunan, manager at Mitsubishi Corp.'s international petroleum business in Tokyo. "[WTI] crude rose [sic] to nearly $38 in August so we are now slowly seeing inventories build up. Also, Opec is becoming desperate."

Prices fell more than $1 last week as Iraq resumed shipments of pipelines and resumed crude exports and the Norwegian strike ended.

The head of Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization said on Monday that exports from its two southern ports were close to two million barrels a day (bpd) and a "small incident" at an idle pipeline were the weekend had no impact on overseas sales.

Dil prices have come down from $41 per barrel at most than $42 a barrel in late in June as evidence has emerged that more oil is hitting the market from Opec producers.

Consultancy Oil Movements said last week that new crude oil shipments from Middle East Opec producers jumped by 740,000 bpd in June versus May, while shipments in the first 10 days of July surged 1.6 million bpd, relative to the previous month.

Middle East liftings of crude oil take place about six weeks ahead of delivery due to the sailing times.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed earlier in June to raise its formal production limits by two million bpd from July 1 to end existing prices.

It already agreed to lift output by a further 500,000 bpd from August 1. ...

"There's a lot of crude on the water," a New York-based broker said. "Anyone assuming physical barrels late no problems. Fundamentally the market shouldn't be above $33."

Pipline supplies are beginning to show signs of normalcy.

US governmental data released last Wednesday showed crude stocks rising 2.5 million barrels in the week to June 18 to a 22-month-high barrel surplus over the year-ago period.

US crude stocks stood at 301.6 million barrels in the seven days to June 18, the highest level since August 2002. REUTERS

CHINESE job-seekers advertise their skills at a street corner in the city of Harbin. Leaders in Beijing fear issues job issues could lead to wider social unrest, threatening a decade-old economic growth. AFP/FILE

In China, people pay price of reforms

SHUWANG, China—Reporter:

That's how Jacky Qu sums up his job prospects when he graduates next year from college in the frigid northeastern Chinese city of Shenyang.

"I've seen both my parents lose their jobs," the 22-year-old computer studies major said, earning a beer in a pub where he sings pub-time to earn extra cash. "There's no work up here. I'd rather go anywhere but Shenyang."

Qu's parents thought they would have jobs for life at state-run firms in China's old industrial heartland.

After Beijing launched economic reforms more than two decades ago, many hardworking state Firms found they would no longer keep pace with their leaner counterparts along the coast who were busy attracting foreign investment.

Jobs vanished at an alarming rate. Take as before and take plant Harbin Airfoil Industries Group, a five hours from the Russian border. The firm employed three-quarters of its workforce over the past 20 years, though it still employs 27,000 people.

Communist Party leaders in Beijing, who value stability above all else, fear many job losses in the northeast could spread widespread unrest, frustrating a decade of breakneck national economic growth and even the Chinese state itself.

Once the source jewel of the centrally planned economy, the northeast is China's rust belt today. The countryside is littered with the hulks of factories, and there are continuing the railway tailings that once ferried goods to the rest of the country.

College students such as Qu will graduate into a tight labor market, with 2.5 times more graduates seeking work than in 2001, state media say. And further increases in the rates has made work scarce.

The northeast is rapidly becoming a source of labor for the rest of China—113,00 people left Shenyang last year to find work elsewhere. The city even encourages richer provinces to hold employment fairs.

So what does the future hold for Qu?

"I want to go to Dalian. I want to become a pop star."

Reuters

Asia grain trade slow on high stocks

TOKYO—Japanese and Taiwanese buyers of corn and soybeans are likely to take a less prolific this week as high levels of stocks and slack domestic demand turn them cautious about making fresh import deals, traders said on Monday.

In Taiwan, large buyers of grain and oilseed have stepped in the down high levels amid low demand.

But concern about a possible rebound in freight rates as Chinese buyers return to the market is helping spur the purchase, according to traders.

Domestic prices for corn appear to have stabilized at TS1.8 ($0.1771) per kilogram—down 20 percent from TS7.5 earlier in the year—due to previous overbuying. Chain imports and darkened demand from the feed industry. Reuters

Asian markets fall ahead of looming hike in US rates

SINGAPORE—Asian markets fell and the dollar shifted ahead of an expected rise in US interest rates.

But in Japan, the market fared well. Stocks rose to a nine-week closing high on Monday on hopes for a good corporate sentiment survey this week.

Anticipation that the quarterly Bank of Japan "tankan" sentiment survey due on Thursday, would show companies were more upbeat drew. Once facts been since the early 1990s based investors to underweighted blue-chip stocks such as optical fiber maker Furukawa Electric Co., which rose three percent.

The Nikkei average closed up 0.9 percent at 11,888.06.

Other Asian stock markets were broadly lower. An MSCI index of non-Japan Asian shares shed 0.6 percent and by 0605 GMT, led by a 1.5 percent slide on Taiwan's TSEC.

Taiwan banking shares were hit by worries the stock market's weakness in May and June would hit their second quarter earnings.

The US Federal Reserve's two-day rate-setting policy meeting kicks off on Tuesday. The central bank is expected to raise the benchmark rate by 0.25 percentage point from a 46-year low of one percent.

"The market is paying attention to the Fed's statement to see how quickly the Fed will raise rates after this meeting," said Toshihiro Ataeta, fund manager at Sumitomo Trust and Banking.

Ahead of the rankest, Japanese industrial output data for May due on Tuesday, is also keenly awaited for clues on the sustainability of Japan's expected growth.

Japanese government bond prices were little changed as the market awaited the data due out this week. Reuters

18 rules for good hydration /C3

LIFESTYLE

Editor: Chris Baral-Fonacier

How to use elliptical trainers and rowers

ELLIPTICAL machines are one of the most popular pieces of cardio equipment in the gym. They are part stepper, part bike, part stair climber, and they also get your arms involved. The machines are called elliptical because your feet make rectangular-ish motions.

A related cardio equipment is the rower, which is also a full-body workout. Rowers are great for building strength and endurance, and they're easy on the joints.

Here's how to use them:

WELL AND GOOD

Rina Jimeno

GOOD-LOOKING Peter Jacos and his new date, Sophie, had heads turning their way all night long.

KABLOT'S gang of four: Rowena Tabuena, controller Joyce Pascual, Francis Lanuza and event designer Nessy Villaruz

JOJO Lembos, program model and broadcaster Angel Barcelona, Michelle San Agustin, Bojanova Villareal and Don Francisco of the popular Robinsons Place Iloilo partners it's dinner at Vega.

Iloilo catches Saturday night fever

BIG supers at 213 Gift Shop are ebb. models Jordan Mia, Tambunting Pryce and Genevieve Oppen Cojuangco

High society's lovable couple: Business magnate Tito Lagdameo with wife, Mary Cojuangco, during the opening of 213 Gift Shop

GANG of 6 here at their favorite gift shop. Jackie Epenso Lopez, Mia Floresca and Priya Epenso

EVA Abrasaldo goes for the eye-catching art

INTERIOR designer, sister Carmi Martin, can't resist the eye-catching bags

213 Gift Shop's first couple John Lagdameo and his wife, the gal in the limelight...Aria Apo, with close pal Vincent Velez

I was one of those fab Saturday night fever lookers and there was no reason to say—no to my home, palangpon.

"Only the rich and the lookers invited are staying home tonight," said one very catty party girl amid ups and spills of iced vodka.

But all reasons, day-tripping, jumping flags, Metro Iloilo's ultimate party plans, was the hottest "in" place that Saturday night. I was there.

Needless to say, there was a sea of humanity all dressed up to the nines. Virgo's main venue, the super classy Vega Restaurant, the super classy Elmer Dadoc and owner Lil, good-looking Southern gal Jeanne Villareal, together with absolutely sensible Eryk Smith, delivered some of the best sounds of the '70s, '80s and '90s much to the delight of the party-hearty crowd.

The fabulous twins of Iloilo shakers, Mr. Alvin Villareal, proprietor Candy Darmadhi and dejected Nice Dadoc were all over the place making sure everyone was having fun. And if someone was getting too drunk, he was asked to leave and even driven home. Southern hospitality at its best, palangpon!

Party organizer, fun-fun Sweety Hontanas, was living everything up. Bebe Fariñas, with creative designer par excellence Edgar Lopez-Saulo, and Red and vivacious Marisol Seven Magsaysay.

In conversations with a couple of real personas in the club, I found out Iloilo had as much intrigues, scenery and gossip as Manila. There were whispers about this very high profile personality with plans to run for a high position. But he's got one big problem—his mistress is threatening to expose his private life to both his spouse in Iloilo as well as here in Manila.

See, play with fire and you can get burned, palangpon.

Talking about politics they asked me, "Manila, in what party system do you believe?" So I said, "I believe in the two-party system. One on Friday and the other on Saturday." Well, I assured us have mastered a lot of two-party system believers that night.

Strutting out that evening were good-looking Peter Jacos and his eye-catching date Sophie; aspiring models Harley Magsaysan and gorgeous hand-

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Heather Alexander

Photos by Alex Van Hagen
on Kodak Max

corner angel Barcelona.

There was a long line of ride's rides, rides that put riders out! But one thing for sure, everyone was dressed to say and be seen. Wild, wild, wild, palangpon! After all, Vega is the place to be in.

A gem of a store

It's a treasure trove, this one-of-the-way gift shop. "But we're not," rides by a boutique, Mona Liza Tiu insists she's a potential," says my pal, vivacious Ana Aida Lagdameo.

It has an incredible array of one-of-a-kind pieces, simply must-haves, bed-spread objects, paintings. That you cannot resist getting for yourself or for someone. There is the artistry of handmade jewelry with semi-precious stones and sculptures, personal and home accessories meticulously hand-picked during their yearly trips to Manila and Cebu by the famous Iloilo duo who've selected Ukrainian Upchurch, plus their own antiques.

Did anyone say yes, palangpon? Well, little wooden boxes of the best Cuban tea from Sri Lanka.

Frankly, a must see for all visitors.

After their years of travel and with her know-how, she has made a "home" for all the exquisite treasures we would love to wear & use to give.

With a double major in Fashion Merchandising and Marketing at FIDM (Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising) in San Francisco, California, the gem of a girl knows the ABCs of shopping.

"The concept was always there. It just had to be done at the right time—at the right place. Once was the idea," she reflected.

The black-and-white shopping bags of 213 are a "must-keep." We know, the blind women heard from those two expensive bottles.

"213 is equivalent to chocolate for the chocoholics... It's pure delight for the shopaholics!" said Victoria Tabet.

"Mula sa mamon Isabel Sumong, the store is synonym to food? It's like traveling the world in a spin—having everything that's rare and beautiful at an arm's reach. 213 the Shop is in now. What makes it wonderful is she's sharing this delightful experience with everyone," gorgeous Nadine B. Marbaise gushed.

"It's excellent shopping," said Lisa Cojuangco Cruz.

"This home stuff, top-quality, at good prices," said Rina Lim.

"I love it here! The bags and accessories are simply irresistible! Anything I want to buy everything," said resident penny Percy S. Gaston.

"This shop is dressed like the room," said Ms. Patricia Ann Revilla y Magsaysay.

"Congratulations, sister. I'm so proud of you my dear friend and I love your shop!" commented one of Aria's close pals, Jackie Yanez-Lopez.

To add some glam to the already glamorous thing, Aria's close pal, sultry beauty Eloise Bustria, gave advice on the interior design for the perfect look.

Check it out, palangpon. We can't go wrong. Start ano. 213 Gift Shop at 215 Villeza St., Greenhills, San Juan.

THE BEGINNING Miss Dinagyang, Apple Arro, another pal Miss Dadoc

MAKING a movement. Super mommy Diana Mirasol and Joseph Banaga Sarol

SUPER PALS. Extroverts and brilliant personality Rita Lopez-Pena and Mia Miranda flashing their best smiles

ASPIRING model Sandy Magsaysay

THEY love the night life and love in boogie. Cool cats on the loose—Percy Sarmiento, Jojo Gaston (poorly hidden) and Art Oly Bore

MASTER Byron Vega. Elmer Dadoc, plays '70s, '80s, '90s just today's sounds

VIVACIOUS Marisol Magsaysay of the Guardian with popular Gilbert Dadoc and one

IT'S party time. Marjorie Pierce, Claire Jaramillo and Mar Ng, rock some of their pals, on the dance floor

GORGEOUS young society gal Monica R. Medina can't help but stay at 213.

18-day water nutrition plan

INSIDE OUT

Gary Quirino

TISSUES enter the body primarily via food and drink. Other contaminants come from germs, fumes and cosmetics; but the bulk is from what we consume. Preservatives, colorings and additives in food are toxins and our bodies cannot use them. When toxins accumulate in our bodies, our immune system is challenged.

Water cleans

Toxins are processed through the liver, kidneys, lungs and the body's detoxing systems. Water cleanses the body. If there is a build-up of toxins, the body slows down. There is at least 90-95 percent water in food. Thus, it is recommended to follow a program of optimum hydration, which leads to optimum detoxification.

Remember: Eating food with high water content doesn't mean you can skip your 6-10 glasses of water daily. In this case, more is better.

Water-friendly food

Fish	Oils (buy
Mackerel	Watercress
Sardines	Spinach
Anchovy	Cucumber
Salmon	Pumpkin
Tuna	Bean
Tofu	Sweet corn
Diet	Carrots
Shellfish/oyster	Asparagus
Sesame	Turnips
Walnut	Brussels
Grape seed	Bean
Soy	Peppermint
Cheeses/yo	Jasmine
ghurt	Ginseng
Beaujolais	Ginger
Riesling	Green
Rice	Chamomile
All goat/sheep cheeses	Fruits: Watermelon
Cheries	Banana
Pulasan	Grapes
Lemon	Lemon
Black beans	Orange
Split beans	Pear
Kidney beans	Apple
Vegetables:	Avocado
Lettuce	Mango

18 rules

1. Eat the bulk of food during the day, not late at night.

2. Have a satisfying breakfast. Don't skip it.

3. Exercise but drink a full glass of water before and during a workout. Take 600g sips of water every 15 minutes of exercising.

4. Replace your fluid loss after every visit to the bathroom. Take a full glass of water after wash.

5. Each time you take anything (like coffee or black tea) with high diuretics effect (causing increased production of urine) consume a glass of water before or immediately after.

6. Avoid coffee/caffeine/colas/stimulant drinks. Even if you don't take coffee, but drink lots of soda, you can get dehydrated fast. Any drink with caffeine will dehydrate you. Moreover, it will give you a caffeine/sugar high that will soon crash. This in turn will make you crave for more sugar.

7. Avoid alcohol. For every glass of alcohol, take an equivalent amount of water. Alcohol dehydrates your body. Its diuretic effect is high.

8. Take one glass of water after every urination to replace fluid loss immediately.

9. Eat at least 3 times a day or have 3 small meals daily. Have five portions of fruit daily. Eat 5 portions of veggies a day (one portion is one ladle serving spoon).

10. Take one portion of rice daily.

11. Eat one portion of oily cheese.

12. Take 2 portions of fish/beans/pulse per day.

13. Eat as much raw food as possible. Raw food maintains total fluid levels as well as nutrients.

14. Always serve soup at meal time. You get extra hydration that way.

15. Use cooking methods that retain fluid-baking, grilling, stir-frying.

16. Make your own fresh juices/smoothies.

Breakfast/supper

1 carrot

1 apple

2 celery sticks

1 tsp ginger (grated)

juice of one lime (depip)

Mix carrot and apple in juicer. Add celery, then ginger. Mix in lime juice. Eat. Drink to push you up.

17. Try to avoid herbs and spices that have a diuretic effect on the body such as curry spices, juniper, dandelion, nettle tea.

18. Follow this plan for 18 days.

Water beauty splash

Just a couple splash of cool water on your face is enough to give it a glow. If you are more adventurous, chill the water with a few ice cubes and 3 drops of lemon juice. Make sure you keep your eyes closed.

Imagine and affirm

Visualize yourself next a sparkling waterfall. Let its foam shower you with abundance, love, joy and healing. Declare "I am blessed."

Water, water everywhere. You can never have enough of water

Love and light!

Reference: "Water Detox" by Jane Scrivner

More beauty and wellness tips in "The Gary Quirino Show," Studio 23, 11:30 p.m., Wednesdays; later in "Mi-beauty de Asenso," ANC (SOL), 6:30-7:30 p.m., Sundays

Nourishing the body, mind and spirit in a ranch

INNER AWAKENING

Jaime T. Licauco

EARLY this month, I spent a whole week at the Ideal Ranch in Lethbridge, British Columbia, Canada among some 500 followers or disciples of Bulgarian-French philosopher and mystic, Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov, upon the invitation of Olivier Coste de Bagneis.

For hours of Master Ivanhov before and have read one of his books titled "Love and Sexuality" and got interested in his profound views about life, the cosmos and spirituality. I never knew there were communities of people in several parts of the world who were actually living his philosophy. Ivanhov died in France in 1986. I accepted the invitation not knowing exactly what to expect.

Mr. Coste early said in his letter he wanted to show his appreciation for the enlightening books I've written about our healers and Philippine mystic lore. He asked me to give a series of talks in Canada about my research work and about the psychic healers of the Philippines. He said he wanted me to meet his spiritual community in Jaffray and to take me to the scenic spots in Jasper near the Rocky Mountains which draw thousands of tourists every year. I met Olivier briefly in the '80s in Manila and never suspected I had such an impact on him.

The mostly French-speaking Canadian and American disciples who stay and work on a 64-century farm at the Ideal Ranch live a monastic and almost spartan life, eating only vegetables, cereals and bread. Since I have not been eating meat for so many years, I did not have much difficulty adjusting to their vegetarian diet.

A typical day at the ranch starts with the one-hour meditation at 5:30 a.m. On the first day, I politely joined the community waiting in silence for the sun to rise above the peaks of the Rockies. After the sun had risen for about 10 minutes, the group stood up and raised their hands in salutation to it.

That was the first time I greeted the sun this way. But I had a distinct feeling of déjà vu while doing this. I must have done this ritual so many times before as an Egyptian monk about 3,500 years ago.

Anyway, this homage to the sun is followed by an eclectic exercise taught by Sunday. I did exercise but not as vigorously as the others. Because I didn't bring my thick jacket with a hood. The ranch has an area of 800 acres and about 40 miles from the nearest airport. There are even wild deer, rabbits, eagles and bears in the forested areas.

After the exercise, the group goes to the temple for breakfast. But before that, there are the singing of spiritual songs by the choir, meditation and spiritual lesson for the day delivered by the group's leader, Natacha Rolenac, Ph.D. A brochure of the Ideal Ranch describes Dr. Rolenac as "a mother of two who is highly concerned with the role of pregnancy and the influence of the mother on the unborn child. In 1992, with a group of parents, teachers, artists, health care workers, musicians and others professionals, she launched an educational project called Ideal, which stands for the Institute for the Development in Education, Arts and Leisure.

Together, they experimented and developed new programs and activities for all ages encompassing all facets of education. The community in Jaffray lives this philosophy daily. It offers "education through experience," in keeping with spiritual, ecological, economic and human values. Recently, the institute was accepted as a United Nations NGO.

Natacha strikes me as a stern but loving leader who is well-respected and admired by her followers because of her practical and spiritual solutions, discipline and closeness to the Master whom he was also. A clairvoyant, Natacha can see past lives with Dr. James Hurtak, president of the Academy for Future Science in California and also can sees previous encounters on planet Earth.

Despite all the ranch work in shifts either cooking, cleaning the house, gardening, teaching music, doing carpentry work and ranching, it reminds me of the Findhorn Community in Northern Scotland which was founded by several people led by Peter and Eileen Caddy. The people at the Findhorn live in harmony with the natural environment guided by devic and nature spirits. I met Peter Caddy when he visited the Philippines in the mid-'70s.

It was certainly refreshing and invigorating to live close to nature, where one can nourish his body, mind and spirit without the distractions and pollution of modern city living. After a whole week at the Ideal Ranch, I must have come back to the hustle of California a few pounds lighter and a halo on my head.

PS. I would like to share with my readers this powerful prayer the Ideal Ranch group recites before each meal.

"Ye Lord, come and share this meal with us. Fill it with thy life, thy light and thy love, so that I may share it with all my fellow human. May this flesh of Christ become one with me, may this blood flow through me as a sap of Love and Life.

"Holy Spirit, raise the vibrations of this food so that, through it, I may become one with thee. I thank thee, I thank thee, I thank thee!"

Listen to As my shiftin' radio program every Sunday, 7-8:30 p.m.

Forum on fertility set for July 3

THE ADVANCED Reproductive Care Unit (Arcu) of the St. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC) will hold a one-day fertility forum for lay people, "Bringing Life to Your Dreams," 8 a.m.–12 nn, July 3, 14/F, auditorium, Cathedral Heights Building Cooperplex.

Speakers, specialists in the field of fertility, are: Fertility Basics and Advanced Reproductive Technology" Dr. Judith Yeh Lane de Guzman, Arcu head; "The X Factor (Female Infertility)," Dr. Ma.Concepcion Bautista, chief, Andrology/Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility; "The Y Factor (Male Infertility)," Dr. Ma. Theresa Vergara, Arcu medical director and "Infertility-based Treatment Options for Male and Female Infertility" Dr. Bobby Tan, former president of the Philippine Society of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility.

The forum is open to the public. Visit Arcu at St. Luke's Medical Center, E. Rodriguez Avenue, QC or call 7255555, 7250301 local 7295, or e-mail arcu@stluke.com.ph and fertilityforum@yahoo.com.

Deadline for entries in badminton championships is June 30

THE 4TH JVC Open Championships will be held July 18-25 at the Glorietta Activity Center. Qualifying rounds will be held at the Powersmash Badminton Center.

The competition will have six categories: Elite for competitive players; Veterans for ages 35 and above; 10U for ages 10 and above; Corporate for members of companies within the country's top 1,000 corporations; Celebrity and Schools for the collegiate level.

Each category is sub-divided into men's singles, ladies' singles, men's doubles, ladies doubles, mixed doubles or team event. For the corporate category, each team will have six to 10 players. Participants must submit certificates showing at least a year of employment in the company. They should not have been a member of any national team, here or abroad.

Only eight tournaments will be allowed to compete in the collegiate level with each school having eight to 10 players.

Deadline for submission of entries is tomorrow at the Sunnies Badminton Center, 20 E Mendoza St., San Juan, Metro Manila or JMC Manila office, Unit 1502 Rustan Corporate Center, 121 Valero St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Entry fees are 1,000—P1,000 Elite and Veterans; P500 corporate—P2,500.

Draw dates are July 1 and 4 at the International Hotel Manila. Visit www.jvcsupercom.ec or call 891-5000/6681, 0919-9110869, 7232560 or 0917-5288876. Registration forms may be downloaded from the website.

Over P1 million worth of products, mainly from each prizes, are at stake including Technaflex racquets, Forever Elite shoes and gift certificates and gift packs from event organizers and sponsors.

The JVC Open Badminton Championships is organized by JMC with partners Gerson, Cobasic, Abaka, Body Project, Accel, Apollo Centre, Philippine Star, Tokyo Tokyo, Inchcape, 105.5 Hot, Power Electric, Bacchus, Technocentre, Toby's, Powersmash, Pioneer Life and BC 13.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Pilates side leg lift with circles

THIS Pilates-inspired exercise strengthens the abs as well as the hips and buttocks.

Equipment:
Exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie on your side with your legs together, in line with your hips and shoulders.

2. Rest your head on your best friend on mat and place your top hand on the mat such your palm flat and your finger tips facing your head.

3. Lift the top leg and make eight small circles going forward, then eight small circles going backward.

4. Slowly lower your leg to the mat. Shift. Repeat on the other side.

Performance tips:
1. Breathe normally as you perform the circles.
2. Keep your shoulder and hip from rolling forward or backward by constructing your abdominal muscles and visualizing a glass of water on your shoulder and hip.
3. Lengthen and elongate your leg as you make the circles.

Pepot Rivera:
Do eight circles forward and eight circles backward.

How to use elliptical trainers and rowers

By Anonymous [1]

in several studies.

The low-impact characteristic makes elliptical trainers ideal for people who want a rigorous workout but can't carry weight or have orthopedic problems.

Research shows that the resistance and speed at which you pedal are the two greatest factors that determine calorie burn. Though some types of elliptical machines may be inherently swifter than the treadmill, that doesn't increase the number of calories burned. If you're strokes you feel like you are working harder.

But a machine with dual action handle bars gives you a total body workout compared to the basic body-only emphasis of steppers, bikes and treadmills. Thus, elliptical trainers are right ally called "cross trainers." The elevating it you may or may not use the handle bars.

Pedaling forward on an elliptical puts more emphasis on hamstrings and buttocks while pedaling backward puts the focus on quadriceps, which may, however, be tough on some people's knees.

Like on a treadmill, stand tall and look straight ahead when using an elliptical. Keep your shoulders relaxed and don't grip the handle bars (if you are using them) too tightly. Don't lean forward too much either.

Despite good form and alignment, however, you won't look at much a lot on the quality of the machine. If you want a good machine, get the opposite of a goods stuck-out in describing by participants in an American Council of Exercise experiment that compared several brands.

But keep sliding off bar holders, pedals are not wide enough for the feet and the upper swaying or excessive sideways hip motion. Limited stride length. Issues keep falling the front of the machine, have to lean too far forward to hold the handle bars, baby and lots of weird foot patterns and wobbly machines.

Rowers

Rowing is a total body workout targeting the upper and lower body. But of all the cardio machines, rowers are the hardest to learn properly. The exercises also has to be always, curves of alignment to prevent injury to the lower back. Rowing is not appropriate for people with weak or problem backs.

The best ways to learn how to use a rower is to be taught by someone with a lot of experience and, more importantly, has good form.

What a good form? Here is a description of the proper use of a rower from the Elite Fitness Equipment website.

• Slowly pass your thighs into the foot pedals, and grip the row handle.

• Bring back using the legs to push, and follow through with a pull on the row handle. Keep the back in a neutral position at this point, avoiding any backward arch of the back. The back muscles should do the work. Try to squeeze your shoulder blades together and the chest should expand in a forward direction. Do not bend backward; thus the legs to pull the row handle toward you. This will result in possible stress or injury to the lower back muscles.

• From the furthermost back stroke position, release the two handle so it can swivel silently back in as straight a line as possible, while the legs are still extended. Your wrist should be straight again before you bend the knees to return to the start position.

Dr. Michael Schreiber of Health Fitness Associates says: "A lot of novel have too much of their back into rowing—and therefore too little of their arms and legs, the parts a rower is designed to work. If you have concerned with your back first, you also have yourself vulnerable to muscle strain. One clue that you're doing it wrong: Water pulled the cable back, but your arms are still extended in front of you.

"Proper form entails a fairly precise sequence of movements. Pitch your upper body pitched slightly forward, push back with your legs first. Then lean slightly back and pull the handle toward your gut with your arms. As you return to starting position, extend your arms, bend your legs and lean slightly forward again."

Note: For readers asking where to find fitness chains, gyms and trainers, I am compiling a countrywide directory that will be available for free on the web. Those who want to be on the list, can send the info to me at fitness@pinoymail.com.

All fields and disciplines in health, sports, dance and fitness are welcome [yoga, Pilates, tai chi, martial arts, sports organizations, fitness centers, personal trainers, group exercise instructors, dance studios and instructors, sports medicine doctors, diabetes support groups specializing in eating disorders, etc.] Put your name, contact numbers, address, services and specialization or interests/hobbies.

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